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## LAOS
### NEXT STEP IN THE BIG MUDDY
**Sen. Alan Cranston**

**COMMUNITY CHESTS**
## THE IGNORANT PHILANTHROPISTS
**Beatrice Dinerman**

## Shooting an Elephant
### Nixon's Southern Strategy
**Reese Cleghorn**

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## Generation Gap
**Mead: *Culture and Commitment* / Peter Clecak**
**Terkel: *Hard Times* / Nelson Algren**

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# LETTERS

## radiation

*North Bennington, Vt.*
Dear Sirs: You are in error when you say "these do not continually pollute the atmosphere," speaking of atomic power plants in the editorial, "The Biologists Look Ahead" [*The Nation*, Mar. 2].

All nuclear power plants—routinely—emit radioactivity from the stacks into the atmosphere. These are called "planned releases" by the Atomic Energy Commission. The AEC maintains that the amounts are minimal and harmless, but a growing number of scientists are making studies, and publishing about the somatic and genetic effects of low-level radiation. Their conclusions cast doubt on the nonchalant assurances of the AEC and the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy.

Dr. Charles W. Huver of the University of Minnesota has conducted experiments with low-level radiation which show that there is no threshold—no safe dose of radiation. On the basis of Dr. Huver's work the state of Minnesota has challenged the AEC standard of permissible radiation, and wants to set the level at 2 per cent of the AEC standard. The Northern States Power Company is suing the state of Minnesota. . . .

We don't know for sure that nuclear power plants are necessary for additional electric power, as the AEC says. We haven't begun to research alternatives. But we do know for sure that nuclear power plants are necessary for the military. The *only* source of plutonium for nuclear war heads and bombs are the nuclear power plants.

*Laina Gerrish*

## knowing Lamont

*New York City*
Dear Sirs: In his recent book, *Ambassador's Journal* (p. 44), John Kenneth Galbraith tells of his investigation by the FBI when President John F. Kennedy was about to appoint him ambassador to India:

> My detailed treatment by the FBI was the result of Bourke B. Hickenlooper's having heard that I had been refused a passport because of my acquaintance with Owen Lattimore. This was imaginary. Also there was a rumor that I had lived in the same New York apartment house with Corliss Lamont.* This is true: it was quite a large apartment house in New York. However, I imagine I might have survived a smaller dwelling without serious damage.

* Corliss Lamont, personal friend, philosopher and son of Thomas W. Lamont, the banker and Morgan partner, is a long-time supporter of Left, radical and unpopular causes. Once before, in the early fifties, I had been asked to explain this dangerous cohabitation. I had done so with deeply affronted dignity.

The quotation . . . shows the idiotic extremes to which the FBI goes.

*Corliss Lamont*

## 'dear friends'

*East Coast Demerara, Guyana*
Dear Sirs: In order to become better acquainted with your country, my friend, Mohanie Samar, and I would like to exchange letters with pen pals; we would also like to hear from correspondents about our age (15) in Canada, England and Trinidad. Our hobbies are exchanging photographs, movies, reading. The address of Mohanie Samar is 68 Park Street Enterprise, East Coast Demerara,

(*Continued on page 372*)

# EDITORIALS

## The Peers Report

The panel of investigation headed by Lieut. Gen. William R. Peers has presented its report, on the basis of which the Army has accused fourteen officers of varying degrees of involvement in the suppression of evidence of the Song My massacre. A hearing will now be held to determine whether the officers accused should stand court-martial. The accusations are of less interest to us than a statement made by General Peers when he announced conclusion of the investigation. "Our inquiry clearly established that a tragedy of major proportions occurred there on that day."

Such an admission, by an Army-appointed panel, is extremely important. Opponents of the war now have irrefutable proof that a "tragedy"—it should be called by its right name, a "massacre"—did occur in Song My on that day. The statement should produce a broad political reaction. And as a postscript it should be noted that, but for certain low-level Army personnel and the press, the story of the massacre might have stopped at the point where the Peers panel says it did stop—at the divisional level. Once the media, that collection of effete snobs and ideological delinquents, had got wind of what happened and given the initial reports wide circulation, the Army was obliged to order an official investigation. The Peers report offers no loophole for knee-jerk patriotism. Lieut. Louis Font, the West Point graduate who has asked the Army to discharge him as a conscientious objector to the war in Vietnam, has chosen an opportune moment to call for a halt to this "unjust and immoral" war.

## Was It a Slip?

With the U.S.-USSR talks scheduled to resume in Vienna on April 16, Secretary of the Air Force Robert C. Seamans, Jr., announced on March 10 that the United States would begin to deploy MIRV Minuteman III missiles on July 1. It had been assumed, precisely because the SALT talks were about to start again, that deployment would not begin until much later in the year—the more so since Ambassador Dobrynin had suggested that if the United States raised the issue of an MIRV moratorium at Vienna, the Soviets would be responsive. When Mr. Seamans' bombshell burst, the Soviet defense ministry promptly announced that the decision "seriously threatens" the negotiations. Reaction in the Congress was equally prompt. Senator Brooke said that "precipitate deployment" would be "a reckless act of folly." Rep. Jonathan Bingham said the announcement showed "a total lack of sensitivity" that boded ill for success at Vienna. Senator Percy expressed his view that the United States, at the resumed talks, should propose a freeze on the deployment of all strategic missiles, both offensive and defensive.



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After this flurry of comment, it was said that the government had not intended to announce the July 1 date for deployment, but that the statement giving Mr. Seamans' announcement had "somehow slipped through." He did not say just how this might have happened. Later, the Pentagon said that "everything is negotiable in SALT."

Not only is it unlikely that these statements will repair the damage caused by the initial announcement but it is hard to believe that an announcement of this importance, coming just at this time, could have been a "slip." A more plausible inference is that the disclosure was deliberate, being intended as further pressure on the Russians to agree to a moratorium and, at the same time, to test reactions in Congress. After all, the announcement could always be "explained" as a leak, but the Russians would have received the message and so would right-wing critics of disarmament in this country. A more sinister inference would be that the Air Force put the announcement out in order to impede if not sabotage the SALT talks. If President Nixon is serious about wanting to halt the nuclear arms race, now is the time for him to say so unequivocally. What is even more to the point, he should bring the Pentagon so forcibly to heel that it will not commit further "slips" of this kind.

## Pity the South

As the debate on the nomination of Judge Carswell gets under way, we feel a twinge of pity for the South—that is, the better South, the South all of us know exists and which we should like to honor and respect. A case can be made that the South, as a region, has not shared as well as it might in recent Supreme Court appointments. Not that appointments should be parceled out on a rotating regional basis, any more than that the Court should invariably show a fixed ethnic "balance." But if because of past neglect the South was entitled to the appointment, what a humiliation this inferior candidate must be to responsible Southerners. A letter from the President or Mr. Mitchell to Senators Ervin or Stennis or Fulbright would have brought suggestions, any one of which would have been more acceptable than Carswell. Or the President, who attended the law school at Duke University, might have inquired among the deans of Southern law schools and come up with any number of acceptable nominees—men and women who represent the best traditional values of the South. But Nixon, who woos the South, gives no sign of respecting it, and so he picked a mediocrity who, beyond doubt, is an embarrassment to the Old South. Hence the obvious lack of enthusiasm for Carswell among those Southerners in the Senate who represent what is best in its regional traditions.

The notion that Supreme Court appointments must be parceled out on a regional and ethnic basis has now been carried a point further. Senator Hruska concedes that Carswell is not a Brandeis, a Frank-

# IN THIS ISSUE

*March 30, 1970*


**EDITORIALS**

354

**ARTICLES**

358 Nixon's Southern Strategy: Shooting an Elephant — *Reese Cleghorn*

361 A Prevalence of Bombing — *Charles Howe*

363 Laos: Next Step in the Big Muddy — *Sen. Alan Cranston*

366 Underground Press: Censorship by Harassment — *Kingsley Widmer*

369 Community Chests: The Ignorant Philanthropists — *Beatrice Dinerman*

**BOOKS & THE ARTS**

373 Mead: Culture and Commitment — *Peter Clecak*

376 Terkel: Hard Times — *Nelson Algren*

378 Sissman: Scattered Returns
Pack: Home from the Cemetery
Elliott: From the Berkeley Hills — *X. J. Kennedy*

380 Theatre — *Harold Clurman*

381 Records — *David Hamilton*

381 Che (poem) — *Todd Gitlin*



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furter or a Cardozo, but, he then asks, must all judges be distinguished? Can't some of them be mediocre? Aren't the mediocre, he inquires, entitled to representation on the Court? Numerically they are entitled to it, for their number is legion. But to our knowledge this is the first time that "the mediocre" have been identified as a specific constituency, and the first assertion that it is entitled to representation in any branch of government.

The fight against the Carswell nomination has taken on some strength in recent weeks, as two considerations have come to the fore: his opponents have at last seen the wisdom of advancing the real reason for rejecting the nomination, which is not that Carswell made a stupid and biased speech years ago, or that he tells "Sambo" stories, but that he is a nonentity who, in point of fact, should never have been confirmed for the district court. Then, too, some of the opponents, Senator Bayh in particular, have shrewdly stressed the point that "the young" cannot be expected to respect the appointment of this "incredibly undistinguished" jurist. Any mention of young, new voters these days seems to bring the Senate to attention.

But there remains a mystery about the Carswell nomination. The President and Mr. Mitchell can surely distinguish good judicial material from mediocre. Why then did they select Carswell? Because —as some have suggested—he is not rich, like Haynsworth; because he is a strict constructionist, and has a background almost too meager to provide discussion? Or does this Administration perhaps consciously seek to downgrade the Supreme Court, in relation to Congress and the Executive? Would it take satisfaction in removing the Court from its pedestal, so to speak, robbing it of its authority and prestige? If such was the intention, how better could it have been realized than by appointing this small man? It is a way of suggesting that the Court is not as exalted a repository of wisdom and fair dealing as we had believed.

Wisely, the opponents of the Carswell nomination have decided not to conduct a filibuster (which would have given the Southerners a chance to filibuster on the Voting Rights bill) but to conduct a prolonged and thorough debate. That debate has now started, and it is just possible that the opponents may win. If they do, it will be a further sharp blow to the Nixon Administration. More important, it may save the prestige and authority of the Supreme Court.

## Vested Seniority

Rep. Michael Harrington (D., Mass.) showed rare courage in devoting his maiden speech in the House to the subject of seniority (March 11, pp. 1691-1695, *Congressional Record—House*, which contains some lively discussion). It was an excellent speech, tactful, thoughtful, scholarly. He did not call for total abolition of the principle; what he condemned was total reliance on seniority in the selection of committee chairmen. He restated the familiar arguments with freshness and force. The House was supposed to be (as Madison saw it) the most *responsive* branch of the government—hence two-year terms. But it has locked itself into a system of immobility by reason of its blind reverence for seniority. Only chairmen of committees serve exclusively on the basis of seniority. As Harrington pointed out, Congress has approved legislation compelling civil servants to retire at 70, yet the *average* age of committee chairmen is 70, the average length of service twenty-eight years.

Rep. James A. Burke (D., Mass.) made the familiar rejoinders: seniority makes for continuity of experience. It may result in a black man finally achieving a chairmanship, as in the case of Adam Clayton Powell. It serves, Burke argued further, to protect a man who as chairman of a committee takes unpopular positions against a powerful lobby such as the AMA, which might otherwise succeed in disposing of him. (But aren't elderly chairmen more likely to please than to displease such lobbies?) Carried away by the force of his rhetoric, Burke cited Speaker Joe Cannon, who was so powerful that he ordered the chef in the House restaurant to keep black bean soup on the menu indefinitely. Rep. George Bush (R., Tex.) inquired whether this really wasn't an argument *against* seniority.

We wish Mr. Harrington well in his crusade, but he is addressing the wrong forum. The House, as at present constituted, is not likely to reform itself, and Mr. Burke told us why. House members acquire an interest in seniority that becomes more valuable with age. By and large, critics of the system are newcomers to the House, Mr. Harrington for one, Rep. Jerome Waldie (D., Calif.), who recently challenged Speaker McCormack to step down, for another.

The way to win the fight against seniority is to take the issue to the people. Mr. Harrington made it an issue in the special election which sent him to Washington. It is the kind of issue to which young voters will respond. Why did the Senate act so quickly on the measure to lower the voting age to 18? Because—given the growing number of young voters—few Senators wanted to be on record as having voted against it. State after state has, it is true, voted down the proposal to lower the voting age, but older citizens have been the prime obstacle to change. Older citizens, like long-term Congressmen, are reluctant to share their power, such as it is, with a multitude of new young voters, but the age ratio is shifting. The way for candidates to change the rules is to appeal directly to new constituencies which have nothing to lose and much to gain by the change. Not only did Mr. Harrington make good use of the issue in his campaign but his office has received a fine response to his speech—lots of enthusiastic mail and media people phoning for interviews. So the situation is far from hopeless. Now that the House Democrats have voted to approve a study of alternatives to seniority, but have delayed the deadline for its completion until after the Congressional elections in November, there is more reason to make seniority an issue in the campaign.



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## The Public's Ethics

Like the issue of seniority for House committee chairmen, "ethics" has been endlessly debated by House and Senate alike. Various "codes" have been drafted by the appropriate House and Senate committees, with loopholes through which one could drive a caucus of politicians. The obligation to disclose outside sources of income is a related topic, although it is extremely doubtful that, if enacted, a bill forcing disclosure would do much to discourage political corruption.

Consider California's soft-shoe Senator, George Murphy, who established himself in a new career when his hoofing days were over. An ardent right winger, Murphy became a vice president and speechmaker for Technicolor, Inc., whose president, Patrick J. Frawley, has made that company and his other fief, Eversharp-Schick, vehicles for what is mistakenly called conservatism. Thus Murphy played at Technicolor a role similar to that of Ronald Reagan at General Electric. When Murphy was elected to the Senate in 1964, he continued in that capacity, except that some of his speeches were now delivered in the Senate. Technicolor retained him as a "consultant" on half salary ($20,000 a year, supplemented by a $260-a-month rent allowance and the use of a credit card for travel, etc.).

The arrangement was not particularly secret, nor was it particularly public. However, now that Senator Murphy is up for re-election, his fringe benefits have begun to stir a little breeze, and he hastened to lay the facts before Sen. John Stennis, chairman of the Senate ethics committee. Stennis absolved Murphy, declaring that the absence of conflict of interest was so obvious that he did not deem it necessary to refer the matter to the full committee. After six years, Murphy, in the term applied to an earlier controversial figure, was clean as a hound's tooth.

Not to confine the gossip to right wingers, another problem Senator is Vance Hartke of Indiana, also standing for re-election. Mr. Hartke, who is as far to the Left as Mr. Murphy is to the Right, received a $30,000 campaign contribution from Spiegel, Inc., of Chicago, a big mail order house (annual sales in excess of $300 million). The Senator declares there was no connection between Spiegel's generosity and his position on postal rates legislation. However, Spiegel is currently under federal indictment on charges of paying former Sen. Daniel Brewster of Maryland $24,500 for his vote on the same issue.

Governors as well as Senators may be suspected of conflict-of-interest behavior. Gov. Claude R. Kirk, Jr., of Florida makes no secret of the fact that state contractors, political appointees and friends have contributed more than $200,000 in dues to his "Governor's Club" in the last two years. The club, which pays part of Mr. Kirk's living expenses, received $220,000 more from other sources. According to a story by Martin Waldron in the February 18 *New York Times*, "Some businessmen have said privately that they paid money into the club to maintain good relations with the Governor, lest their state contracts be jeopardized."

It is a safe guess that Murphy, Hartke and Kirk will be re-elected. If so, it will no doubt be for various reasons, some quite unrelated to these contributions. But if they are re-elected, it is a fair inference that their constituents do not worry much about the incidents in question. Of course, political bias plays a part in these matters. If, for instance, Murphy had taken $20,000 a year from the International Longshoremen's and Warehousemen's Union, many a Californian would have been sorely troubled.

The public, or sections of it, assumes that politics is a business, and that if a candidate or incumbent is not wealthy in his own right, he has to get money from some source. If he doesn't get it from the Left, or from militants, all will be forgiven. So the finger points at the electorate. Besides the ethics of officeholders, the ethics of the public should be placed under scrutiny.

## Vindication for Murton

Federal Judge J. Smith Henley, in Little Rock, Ark., has ruled that mere confinement in either the Tucker or Cummins Prison Farms constitutes the "cruel and inhuman" punishment that is prohibited by the Eighth and Fourteenth Amendments; he has given state officials until April 1 to tell him how they propose to eliminate the unconstitutional conditions. Judge Henley's decision is largely predicated on the so-called trusty system under which certain inmates function as security police and as intermediaries between the prisoners and the "free world." That was also one of Thomas Murton's major criticisms of the system in "One Year of Prison Reform" in *The Nation* of January 12.

*The Nation* has inveighed against these iniquitous prison farms for years (see "The Arkansas Prison Farm" by Robert Pearman, *The Nation*, December 26, 1966), and so we are pleased to report the good news of Judge Henley's decision. But we will await further specific assurances from the state officials before cheering too loudly. More than once in the past the Arkansas authorities have side-stepped or sabotaged efforts to humanize the system—including Murton's successful reforms. The people in charge do not need to draw up a plan; Murton was installing a plan, and all they need do is reinstate him as warden. But that is not likely.

Murton, who is now vindicated, finds himself without professional employment, despite the fact that he has a fine academic record as well as first-rate practical experience. He was assistant professor of criminology at Southern Illinois University before Gov. Winthrop Rockefeller appointed him to reform the Arkansas prison system, and had also served as acting chief of corrections in Alaska. A man with such credentials should experience little difficulty in finding suitable employment, but apparently reformers are not cherished in prison circles.



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NIXON'S SOUTHERN STRATEGY

# SHOOTING AN ELEPHANT

**REESE CLEGHORN**

*Mr. Cleghorn edits* South Today, *a monthly digest published by the Southern Regional Council. He is the author, with Pat Watters, of* Climbing Jacob's Ladder, *which Harcourt, Brace & World is bringing out this month in paperback.*

*Atlanta*

Rodney Cook had tried for years to build in Georgia a Republican Party of reform, an alternative to the old courthouse-gang, racist, state Democratic Party. Then came Barry Goldwater, Strom Thurmond, Spiro Agnew, and when the votes were counted in Atlanta's 1969 mayoralty election, Cook, who had been waiting in the wings for eight years for his big political chance, found that he had suffered a dreadful defeat. He won 73 per cent of the white votes, but though popular among Negroes in the past, lost the election to Sam Massell, a liberal Democrat, who took 92 per cent of the black vote. It was, in one sense, the very tail end of an era of hope for "modern Republicanism" in the Deep South's biggest city. That kind of Republicanism may live again in the urban South, but with the Nixon-Agnew "Southern strategy" running at full power, no one should expect it soon. In fact, urban Republicans everywhere might well take note of what happened to Cook.

Cook had done well in Atlanta politics eight years earlier. He was an amateur reformer with a Phi Beta Kappa key, a scoutmaster's credentials and a record of success as an insurance agent. He had been a Democrat until 1952, when he decided to support Eisenhower. Then he had moved into Republicanism by organizing an unofficial planning group designed to edge an elitist Georgia Republican Party closer to the grass roots. He wanted to make the GOP a mass party, a moderate alternative to the reactionary Democrats.

Cook disliked the clublike atmosphere and frequent nonresponsiveness of the Atlanta Board of Aldermen, composed largely of mediocrities and aging veterans. He decided to run for alderman in 1961 and won easily. Another victor was Richard Freeman, a thoughtful Republican lawyer who preferred Eisenhower Republicanism to the old Taft variety. They went into the City Hall council chamber like knives into butter. Overnight, these two Republicans became a rankling force for innovation. "I'm the majority leader; Richard's just the whip," Cook would say in facetious recognition of their loneliness among the Democrats.

Sometimes they stood alone or, at least, stood there a long time before others joined them. When in 1962 the new Mayor, Ivan Allen, Jr., made the extraordinarily inept, and, as later appeared, uncharacteristic decision to erect a wooden barrier between the white and the black sides of a residential area in racial transition, Freeman was the only alderman to vote "No." Cook was in a hospital that day, but on his return he and Freeman led a move to take down the fence; they picked up only one aldermanic supporter, but their position ultimately prevailed. It was that way again when they attacked Atlanta's "ward courtesy" system on liquor stores, whereby each ward's two aldermen had absolute say as to who could have a store, and where. They lost round after round, but won the battle. By that time, everyone knew that they were the Young Turks of City Hall. Cook's usual demeanor was that of the agreeable insurance man, but in the aldermanic chamber he sometimes became red-faced with irritation, and he tried to speak over the heads of his colleagues to a more responsive public.

That was how Cook's political career began. It began, too, with an attempt to build an organization, not of confirmed Republicans but of independents and Democrats who could be brought under a moderate-to-liberal Republican umbrella. His organization was the logical heir to the work of a band of "modern Republicans"—Elbert Tuttle, a state GOP chairman who became the noted chief judge of the U.S. Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals; the late Robert Snodgrass, once Georgia's national committeeman and close friend of Eastern establishment Republicanism; Randolph Thrower, who is now U.S. Commissioner of Internal Revenue; and James Dorsey, who became district attorney in Atlanta under Eisenhower. In 1952 and thereafter these moderate Republicans wrested control of the party from a particularly provincial brand of Taft admirers and post office patronage Republicans. They had high hopes for some of the young comers. The leader of the young comers was Cook.

He and his group proved that the new Republicans could have broad appeal. They wanted their party to span racial lines; it had been winning most of the black votes in Atlanta (Eisenhower did so twice, against the more liberal Adlai Stevenson) and they wanted that to keep happening. At the same time, they hoped to open the doors to white Democrats: mainly to those who disliked the Democratic reigns of Herman Talmadge (1948-54) and Marvin Griffin (1954-58) in the state capitol, and also to those who were appalled by Atlanta's right-wing Congressional representation.

Then the U.S. Supreme Court, headed by Earl Warren, a Republican, threw out Georgia's county-unit system. The Court's "one man one vote" doctrine gave Atlanta fair representation in the Georgia legislature for the first time in half a century. A



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young Republican reformer could perhaps have thought that there was a future for him, not only in Atlanta but also in Georgia, since racist politics and the unit system (which had disfranchised the cities, most of the Negroes and most of the white moderates) were broken.

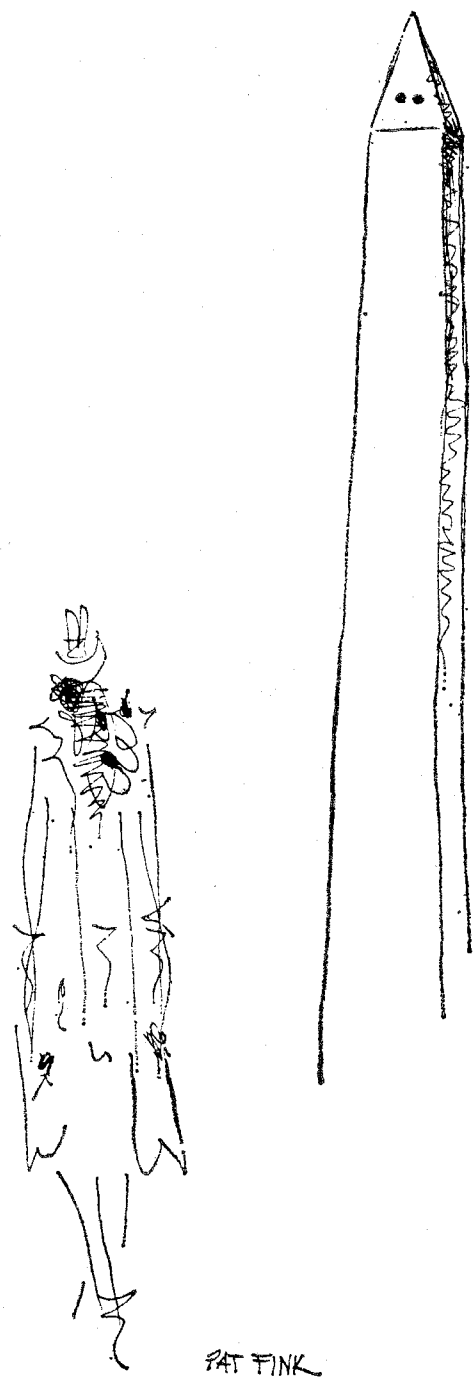
But in late 1969, Rodney Cook, who had been undefeated in five races, who had built his political future on the premise that he would always be strong among black voters as well as among white, suddenly knew what it was to get 8 per cent of the Negro vote. No one can be elected in an Atlanta city-wide race with 8 per cent of the black vote—or 8 per cent of the white vote. The city's registration is now about 59 per cent white and 41 per cent black.

Looking back over Cook's political progress, that flight of black votes is an arresting fact. During twenty-three years in office, Mayor William B. Hartsfield had dealt with Negroes mainly through a few leaders at the top and through election-season grand entrances at black churches. His successor, Mayor Allen, had broadened the contact, but he still dealt mainly with the leaders. It was Cook and a few others who had gone out to meet the man in the street of black Atlanta. They strolled, sometimes once or twice a week, up and down Auburn Avenue, Hunter Street and the dozens of byways where Atlanta's Negroes are concentrated, talked to shopkeepers and pedestrians, made notes of people's complaints about the poor marking of a school crosswalk or the need for a traffic light or poor garbage service.

Within the party, the Cook group tried to bring blacks forward. A Negro was made chairman of a committee to plan the party's expansion in Georgia. Others headed Young Republican and Senior Republican clubs. Negroes were persuaded to run for local offices on the Republican ticket. The first black candidate for a county-wide office during those years, Dr. William Holmes Borders, was one of three at-large candidates for the legislature and thus a leader of the ticket. He had been put on the ticket upon urging of the Cook group. The first black member of the Board of Aldermen, Q. V. Williamson, was a Republican elected in city-at-large voting, partly because Republicans of the Cook persuasion turned out a good Northside white vote for him. On the Board of Aldermen and later as a Fulton County legislator, Cook was a leader in attacking problems of low-income housing, slum landlords, slum clearance (not all of it for handsome commercial and civic edifices), and other matters vital to Negroes.

As a newcomer in 1961, he won almost half the Negro votes cast in his race for alderman. In 1965, he did a little better in a race for the legislature against a Democrat who had been popular among Negroes. That same year, running for re-election as alderman, he won almost 90 per cent of the black votes. In 1966, seeking re-election to the legislature, he again won almost 90 per cent. But in 1968 Cook took only 30 per cent of the black votes in his race for the legislature. That was more than any other Republican received, but it signaled a radical change in Cook's future prospects.

What had happened to Cook was largely done to him by his party. It had shorn away the Negro vote. There have been decades when Atlanta Negroes voted Republican in every national election. They had held to the GOP with Eisenhower; and even in 1960, when they liked John F. Kennedy, they did not desert the Republican Party in mass. But Barry Goldwater was a disaster for Republicans in Atlanta's black community. As his forces rose to the top in the Georgia Republican Party, displacing the At-




*"Even the Washington Monument Looks Racist These Days"*



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lanta moderates who had held control since 1952, the party's stock sank lower and lower among Negroes. Then in 1966 the party offered for governor Howard (Bo) Callaway, who by his vociferous anti-civil rights posture, drove Negroes still further from the GOP. Today, Richard Nixon and Spiro Agnew are to Negroes the visible embodiment of a Republican courtship of the whites in the South who want a slowdown.

So it was that when Cook ran for mayor, in a non-party election in which he was not labeled a Republican, handbills went out in the black community—"STOP RODNEY COOK!"

Cook had himself contributed to the loss of black support by four principal decisions which now could be cited by his opponents. As a legislator, he had opposed the selection of a politically influential Negro Atlantan, Jessie Hill, for the State Highway Board; he accepted, instead, the choice of downtown Atlanta businessmen. Cook also was against changing the at-large method of electing Atlanta aldermen to a system of ward elections. He said he thought a ward system would be susceptible to petty trading and corruption, but it was a change sought by Negroes as a means of increasing their representation. At one point he opposed the creation of a new ward, though he eventually voted for it; this new ward, predominantly black, increased Negro aldermanic strength. Finally, he had sought the annexation of Sandy Springs, a suburb of about 25,000 people, most of them white, middle class and Republican. This seemed to many blacks an effort to dilute their voting power in the city.

So Cook was in a tough position, made infinitely tougher by the fact that Massell had a consistent record of favoring measures supported by most of the black community and was readily identifiable as a liberal Democrat. As vice mayor, Massell had presided over the Board of Aldermen, and so did not have to cast nearly as many votes on prickly matters as did Cook. Cook was not only an alderman but also a member of the Georgia House of Representatives, and there, too, he had had to make choices that alienated some voters. He had risked his position with white voters in 1966 when, with only a handful of colleagues, he had voted to seat Julian Bond. But this did not seem to count for much in 1969. To Negroes, Massell was an obvious friend, but some were beginning to wonder about his Republican opponent.

Still, Cook could look around and see friends in key positions in black grass-roots organizations. Such well-known militant black spokesmen as Hosea Williams and Willie Ricks, both of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, seemed to be on his side. Dr. Horace Tate, defeated black candidate for mayor, publicly endorsed Cook in the run-off. Since Dr. Tate had won half the black votes, Cook headquarters expected this help to make some difference.

Until the Sunday before the Wednesday election, Cook thought he would win 20 to 25 per cent of the black votes. Then Mayor Allen, who had made no public endorsement but who was known to favor Cook, announced in jut-jawed style that he believed Massell had badly misused his office and should withdraw from the race. An investigation by Police Chief Herbert Jenkins showed that Massell had asked for a police captain who was a member of the vice squad to be assigned as bodyguard for his campaign, and that this captain had then been on hand while Massell's brother sought campaign contributions from night-club operators, who are subject to vice squad enforcement.

Massell counterattacked. The charges, he said, were part of a last-minute trick by some power structure leaders to keep him out of office. Massell, who is Jewish, saw anti-Semitism. He said that the people who did not want him in their clubs now did not want him in the mayor's office. His supporters raised obvious questions: Why so late in the campaign? Why such a sledge hammer?

Massell's defense appears to have projected a convincing picture of an underdog fighting against powerful political, civic, banking and newspaper interests, but among white voters the attack and response were probably a standoff. In the black community, it was different. The Man had emerged (not just Allen but The Man, the white men who run things) and he was telling them how to vote. When the first black precincts began reporting on election night, Cook's fate was clear. He received an estimated 47,500 white votes and only 3,800 black votes; Massell had about 17,500 white votes and 45,100 black votes.

The late charges in the campaign probably had turned out the black vote against Cook, but why should that have been so easy to do? What happened to Cook must ultimately go back to what had happened to his party. If there had been no "Southern strategy," no Strom Thurmond in the forefront, no Spiro Agnew embodying the policy of the White House, no local right-wing Republican Congressmen, no right-wing and segregationist tinge to the party at the state level, Cook's Republican label would have been no more of a disadvantage than it had been eight years earlier. Neither Cook's work on the problems of ghetto Atlanta nor his now defeated efforts to give Negroes stature in his party organization could ward off the damage done by those names which had become, to most black voters, the Republican Party.

Cook will not change parties. He still hopes for a political future in Atlanta. Where will a politician in his position turn? It is evident already that he is looking to the suburbs and the satellite towns, hoping to find white voters there who will support him in the future. As a legislator, Cook is working for consolidation of Atlanta with its surrounding county, Fulton. Black legislators oppose that change, and so



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do most white politicians who have recently had strong black support.

The hopes which Cook and his allies had for a broad political organization across racial lines now seem dim. Perhaps Republicans of moderate-to-liberal bent outside the South may be able to convince black voters that pulling a Republican lever does not amount to voting anti-black. But within the South, this has been made much more difficult by Vice President Agnew's efforts to appeal to the George Wallace voters during several political forays in the region. Agnew told the Southern Governors' Conference in September: "Now, this Administration favors integration, but not mandatory and forced, artificially contrived social acceptance. . . . I mean that if people live in a neighborhood, they're entitled to be associated together." Since that speech, he has made many others like it across the South. Southern black voters know that the most segregation-minded of Southern Governors now use words very much like Agnew's. They do not say they oppose integration; they simply say they oppose it when it is "mandatory and forced." The courts have said integration is mandatory and they have forced it, so the Agnew position closely approaches that of Georgia's Gov. Lester Maddox or of George Wallace himself. This may be a good way to attract Wallace voters, but it is driving black Southerners further away from the Republican Party, and it is proving a disaster for moderate Republicans like Rodney Cook. □

# A PREVALENCE OF BOMBING

**CHARLES HOWE**
*Mr. Howe, the military correspondent for the* San Francisco Chronicle, *was a demolitions expert during part of his tour of duty with the U.S. Marine Corps. He is the author of* Valley of Fire, *a novel about the Korean War.*

*San Francisco*

In February, a San Francisco bombing killed a police sergeant and wounded nine fellow officers. In March, an explosion in New York killed three, perhaps four, persons suspected of fabricating bombs. A day or so later, terror bombs, evidently so planted as to minimize the risk to human life, were detonated in three Manhattan office buildings. In Maryland, a bomb shattered a courthouse, and another killed the two men who seemed to have been transporting it.

Faced by this alarming incidence of explosions, one must be skeptical of current theories that stress one or another massive conspiracy, and think, rather, of various small groups of disgruntled citizens—the majority young—who have at best tenuous links with one another.

If to this one adds the proliferation of do-it-yourself manuals on how to assemble a very simple destructive device that can nevertheless shatter a police station house, one has a reasonably accurate picture of what is troubling and baffling police agencies in major American cities. Despite the various techniques employed in these bombings, the San Francisco pattern probably serves as well as any to illustrate a national trend that recalls Resistance activities in Europe during World War II.

In the past twelve months, the San Francisco Bay Area has been hit by at least seventy bombings, ranging from Molotov cocktails tossed into ROTC booths on campus to sophisticated military explosives that shattered three power transformers located in the Oakland foothills.

With few exceptions there was no forewarning, and in almost all cases the devices were exploded at night or during the early morning hours. Several suspects have been apprehended, but investigators admit that none could be linked to more than two or three bombings, and there is no evidence that the suspects are members of any well-established group of dissidents.

Until the night of February 16, when a bomb was set off on the ledge of a window at Park Police Station, the Bay Area had taken the bombings somewhat in stride; remote objects, for the most part, had been hit and there had been no injuries save, in one case a student at San Francisco State College who blew off some fingers and damaged one eye when a bomb he was planting in a locker exploded prematurely. But the pipe bomb that went off shortly before 11 P.M. at the station, near Haight-Ashbury, produced a bitter comment from Mayor Joseph Alioto, plus a reward—still uncollected—of $35,000.

The Park Police Station bomb was made of an iron pipe and contained explosives with an estimated explosive equivalent of five sticks of dynamite. Built like a shaped charge, it sprayed roofing nails and bullets of various caliber in through the station house window, mutilating Sgt. Brian McDonnell, who died without regaining consciousness two days later. Nine other policemen on duty in or outside the house suffered lesser injuries.

The Mayor, who grew up in the heavily Italian North Beach area of San Francisco, alluded to "anarchists" and "the Black Hand." Later, he admitted that, like the ten police inspectors assigned to the investigation, he had no inkling as to who had set off the charge.

Other factors besides the flourishing literature on how to put bombs together are troubling police in San Francisco, Denver and New York, where false bomb alerts outnumber the real thing by a ratio of



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200 to 1. The ingredients in the Park Station bomb, for example, were ordinary gunpowder plus several chemical additives readily purchased from supply houses. In most cities in the United States, gunpowder can be purchased without a permit and without identification—thanks, largely, to the gun lobby, which declares the stuff is necessary to the happiness of those who load their own bullets.

Dynamite is only slightly less available. Since April 1968, 8,300 pounds of high explosives—enough to demolish the Golden Gate Bridge—have been stolen from California construction sites and warehouses. For that matter, purchasing this explosive in California and in most other states is a routine transaction, usually calling for the display of one piece of identification and the filling out of a simple form returnable to the state fire marshal.

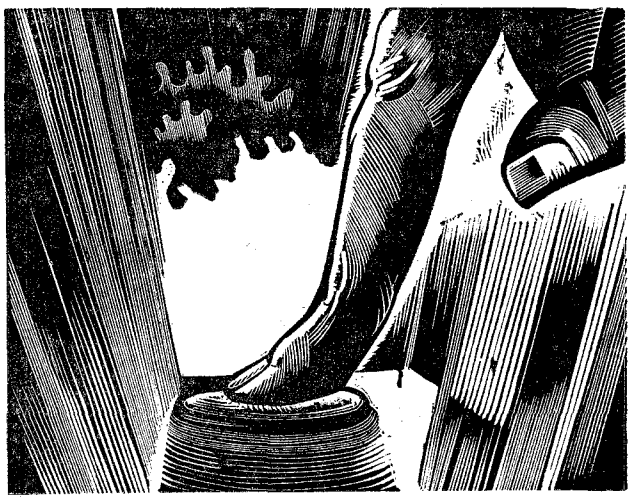
Literature explaining how to construct an explosive device first came to light in California five years ago when the Minutemen, an extreme and armed right-wing group, began placing advertisements in magazines and newspapers. Other outfits advertised a variety of manuals, the majority of them U.S. Army documents, that advise the casual reader how he may, like Lawrence of Arabia, blow up a bridge or cut tracks leading into a railhead. Charles O'Brien, Chief Assistant Attorney General of California, believes that if the right wing started selling the manuals and documents, the left wing lost little time in cribbing from them.

But O'Brien adds that his office has been unable to uncover any conspiracy or group of conspiracies which would enable his investigators to make a raid, seize a cache of explosives, and end the bombings which now average about one a week throughout the state. Political radicals, O'Brien points out, are not the only persons "heavily into the bomb scene. We have picked up people dangerously prone to drugs who are dealing with very unstable explosives." He cited the case, a year ago, of a young man decidedly under the influence of LSD, who was found carting a case of moldering World War II explosives about the city.

Dynamite manufacturers, who sell the explosive for less than $20 per case of 100 sticks, say they are reluctant to code the material with respect to place of manufacture or to number each stick, so that when, as happened in early March, police pick up sixty sticks of dynamite hastily tossed on the road, they might check back and determine where it was bought—or stolen. "It would add to construction costs," said a spokesman for a concern which makes tons of dynamite monthly. "Besides, we doubt if coding would be a real benefit."

What police do not know about "the new bombers" is considerable and the best of the investigators are willing to admit their handicaps. They rely heavily on informants. Thus a narcotics suspect may be "turned around" and used as informant or provocateur if officers feel the information he can furnish them will substantially outweigh the seriousness of the case pending against him.

But in San Francisco and other cities—Chicago, Denver and New York—where the drug scene is woven, in part, into the bomb scene, police admit their efforts are being hampered by what they call "the new tipster"—the informant who promises to deliver explosives or suspects, but has, in fact, nothing to offer.



The police are well into the established radical organizations of the Left and the Right—the American Communist Party and the American Nazi Party—but thus far few, if any, of their informants have "penetrated" the small groups that are believed to be carrying out bomb assaults. An investigator commented, "All we have to rely on is physical evidence at the scene, plus the usual tips. We could cut off an informant's water on another kind of case where priority wasn't as great. But in a bombing situation, every lead no matter how tenuous must be run to ground."

With tons of dynamite and thousands of blasting caps bought or stolen, police in California are as worried about an accidental blast—such as the March 6 explosion in Greenwich Village that took several lives—as they are about bombs deliberately set. An example of what they fear is the case of Don Sisco, a 38-year-old member of the American Nazi Party, who was selling by mail two manuals: "Explosives Like Grand Dad Used To Make" and "The Militants Formulary." In October 1969, Sisco's zeal for a new explosive apparently made him careless and he blew off most of the fingers of his left hand and seriously injured his eye. Now under surveillance in a little Northern California town, Sisco has assured intelligence agents that his bomb-making days are over.

Even under ideal circumstances, explosives are tricky. Like wine, dynamite ages and as it ages it "sweats"; tiny droplets of nitroglycerine appear on the outside of each stick. These droplets are, in effect, detonators. Careless handling can set them off and create a chain reaction.



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In addition, electric blasting caps—which were probably used in the blasting of three Manhattan skyscrapers on March 12—can be extremely unpredictable in the hands of amateurs. Signals from police or citizens' band radios have set off rigged charges of explosives implanted with electric caps. In other instances a charge has been prematurely fired by static electricity carried in a metal object brought into contact with the bomb.

Legislators have now begun to catch up with police concern about the danger implicit in pamphlets that graphically explain bomb making. As matters stand, no federal statute seems to be violated when one mails this literature, as long as violent revolution is not directly mentioned. In Sacramento, politicians are also talking about increasing the penalty for unlawful possession of explosives, which is now five years in the penitentiary.

Restrictions on the recipe books or stiffer sentences for possession would be stopgap measures, designed mainly to assuage frightened citizens. Their effect would be slight upon anyone who seriously contemplated bombing a campus or toppling a power pylon. However, tighter controls over explosives would appear to be the first constructive step state governments should take. These controls, the police agree, should include better custody of explosives on construction sites, where now an elderly watchman may be responsible for patrolling 5 square miles of territory that includes one or more bunkers filled with dynamite.

And although civil libertarians and construction men would no doubt bitterly fight such a measure, some lawmakers talk of requiring a permit that would include fingerprinting and photographing any person who wanted to buy explosives, much as some jurisdictions now control the sale of firearms.

If the bombings and threats of bombings continue to escalate, there is a real danger that enabling legislation may be enacted which would give the police far wider powers than they now possess or should ever have. "We could establish police corridors, where cars were shaken down and persons carrying packages and luggage were stopped and searched," one investigator theorized. Some radical groups would be pleased if such repressive measures were enacted, on the theory that "things have to get worse before the people will revolt."

Other established organizations view the continuance of bombing as a serious threat to their existence. The Communist Party of Northern California, for example, recently issued a statement deploring acts of individual terror. "This cult of violence creates conditions made to order in which police agents can operate," the statement declared. "It also encourages the police and the ultra right to respond to an atmosphere thus created. . . ." Adding that American youth has every right to be angry with the state of the nation, the statement concluded: "The Communist Party of Northern California calls on all segments of the movement to close ranks—to expose those who are enemies of the people. . . ."

Observers close to both the radical and the law-enforcement scenes believe that this may be the first time within memory when the police and the Communists have joined in a common cause. □

# Laos: Next Step in the Big Muddy

**Sen. ALAN CRANSTON**
*Mr. Cranston is a United States Senator from California.*

*Washington*

The people spoke in 1968, and they spoke against the war in Vietnam. But now it is 1970, and American men are still fighting and dying there. Some troops have been withdrawn, but the Nixon Administration has never made it plain that it intends to get all our fighting men out of Vietnam, this year, next year, or any year. It, like the administration before it, seems either unable or unwilling to muster the courage to change our course.

Now there looms the danger of a new Vietnam in Laos. The war in Laos and the war in Vietnam are separate parts of the same conflict.

The Administration, it seems to me, is pursuing a double-risk policy that could keep American troops in Southeast Asia for years. On the one hand, there is convincing evidence that U.S. military involvement in Laos is being escalated in much the same way that we escalated in Vietnam in 1964. On the other hand, Vietnamization is beginning to look more and more like a convenient way for us to create an army of South Vietnamese mercenaries to continue a conflict that is neither in our national interests nor in those of the Vietnamese people.

The war between Communist and other factions in Laos had been sputtering along in a sleepy fashion for years, both sides taking pains to avoid each other whenever possible. Sometimes one side would win, sometimes the other; it depended on the season of the year and the zeal of the local commanders.

In recent years, however, there have been alarming changes in the situation. The United States has created a secret mercenary army of Meo tribesmen. It is commanded by Laotian officers, but its men are recruited, paid, armed, trained and advised by the CIA, and by U.S. military officers. The regular Laotian army seems to have been replaced on the battle lines by these Meo mercenaries. Thai, Nation-



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alist Chinese and Filipino troops also are reported in Laos.

Last summer, the Meo went on the offensive and overran North Vietnamese and Pathet Lao positions on the Plain of Jars. The Meo displayed more initiative and determination than is generally seen in Laos. Predictably, the offensive alarmed the other side. A counterattack was launched and, during the last few weeks, our badly extended mercenaries were pushed back. So the violence on the ground has increased, in part because of American involvement in the war.

While U.S. efforts were helping to escalate the ground war in Laos, American planes were stepping up the air war at an incredible rate. American air activity there jumped from 4,500 sorties a month when the United States was still bombing North Vietnam, to between 12,500 and 15,000 a month today. Much of the increase is our response to expanded use of the Ho Chi Minh Trail by the North Vietnamese, but American bombing missions into other parts of Laos are also significant factors.

The exact nature of the bombing is not known because, like the other aspects of our involvement in Laos, the operations are shrouded in secrecy. In almost every way, the war in Laos has been a secret war. The Administration has kept it that way because the United States signed a treaty declaring we would keep our military personnel out of Laos.

Specifically, the Geneva Accords, signed by the United States and thirteen other countries in 1962, state that "the introduction of foreign regular and irregular troops, foreign para-military formations and foreign military personnel into Laos is prohibited." The treaty defines foreign military personnel to include "members of foreign military missions, foreign military advisors, experts, instructors, consultants, technicians, observers and any other foreign military persons. . . ."

In short, the United States is violating the Geneva Accords and has been violating them for many years. So the Administration has tried to keep the press at bay and to avoid testifying publicly on the real nature of our involvement in Laos.

The Communists, of course, know what we are doing. It's no military secret to them that we bomb them or that our mercenaries attack them. The Communists are violating the Geneva Accords—and won't admit it. The United States is violating the Accords—and won't admit it.

"Civilian" pilots hired by the CIA and AID fly our mercenaries and their supplies around the country, and the government covers the whole thing up as a relief operation to provide supplies for refugees. When the planes are shot down, the embassy in Vientiane simply attributes their loss to bad weather conditions. The Administration conveniently forgets how this practice distorts and perverts the whole concept of foreign assistance.

Meanwhile, our military planes blast away from the air with a considerable degree of immunity. There are those who seem really not to care if the same friendly village is hit three times—as actually happened in Laos—or if women and children in unfriendly villages are burned to death. Money for the secret army and the disguised air flights is buried in CIA and AID budgets, hidden from the people and their elected representatives.

A congenial host perpetuates this sham by piously repeating from time to time that "there are no foreign troops in Laos except North Vietnamese." Souvanna Phouma knows perfectly well that his statement is nonsense. Enterprising reporters have proved it nonsense. Senators and Representatives know it is nonsense—and are asking the Administration to set the record straight.

President Nixon has responded by issuing what he calls a precise description of American activities in Laos. He reported, among other things, that "no American stationed in Laos has ever been killed in ground combat operations." A day later, the *Los Angeles Times* disclosed that Capt. Joseph K. Bush, Jr., an American military adviser, was killed in ground combat at Muong Soui, on the western edge of the Plain of Jars, on February 11, 1969. The White House acknowledged that Captain Bush had been killed by hostile fire, and stated that the President had not been told of his death. He, like the American public, learned about it from an American press which, fortunately, has refused to be intimidated by the Administration's efforts to soften or silence its reporting of the wars in Southeast Asia.

The White House then went on to argue that Captain Bush was not killed in Laotian "ground combat operations." However, he was awarded a Silver Star posthumously, and the citation says that he killed two enemy soldiers before he fell while defending a compound at Muong Soui.

It is impossible, perhaps, to define "ground combat," there being so many ways to interpret the mission of men who, in fact, engage in ground combat. But there is a second nicety of definition in Mr. Nixon's statement that we must not gloss over. The three key words are, "stationed in Laos."

I have asked the President how many men not "stationed in Laos" have been killed there. The question needs answering because I have talked with young Americans who were stationed in Vietnam and who tell me they were sent across the border into Laos. They say they were armed, and on military missions. They say they were under orders that, if captured, they were to tell the enemy that they had become lost, misread their maps, and strayed into Laos. They were to say that they thought all along that they were inside Vietnam.

One former GI tells me he was sent with others to pick up American dead in Laos and to bring them back to Vietnam. The slain would then be counted as casualties in Vietnam, not casualties in Laos.

The President's statement on Laos also sought to



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Huffaker, News & Observer (Raleigh)

persuade us that most of the intervention on the ground in Laos is by North Vietnam, not by the United States. He declared that 67,000 North Vietnamese troops are in Laos, and compared this to what he declared to be a total of 1,040 Americans directly employed by the U.S. Government in Laos, or employed on contract by our government, or by government contractors, in Laos. But Mr. Nixon made no reference to our army of Meo mercenaries. They change the comparison considerably. Estimates of Meo troop strength run as high as 40,000 men. I have asked the President to divulge the maximum number of Meo tribesmen that have been on the American payroll during the Johnson administration, and during his own Administration.

There are those in the present Administration who seem determined to make another bad little war into another bad big war. But it won't be as easy to embroil the nation as deeply in Laos as it has become embroiled in Vietnam. The U.S. Senate has made it more difficult for this Administration—or any administration—to send full battalions and divisions of American troops into Laos. Congress adopted an amendment to the Armed Services Appropriations bill, offered by Sen. Frank Church of Idaho, stipulating that none of its funds could be used to introduce ground combat troops into Laos or Thailand without prior consent of Congress.

But even with the Senate amendment, even with the strong concern and criticism in Congress, and the accurate and determined reporting by the press, we're already knee-deep in a new Big Muddy.

Meanwhile, the old Big Muddy oozes along, sucking up lives and dollars at a steady rate. There is a great danger that the Nixon Administration still seeks victory in Vietnam; at the least, it is obviously planning to use American artillerymen, airmen and support troops to prolong the conflict.

Under Richard Nixon, Vietnamization has become just another way of paying foreign troops to fight a war the Administration wants to wage. In Laos we hire mercenaries; in Vietnam a more sophisticated method is used. The Saigon generals forcibly conscript Vietnamese boys into their army. We pay their salaries indirectly through foreign assistance; we provide their arms, equipment and training directly. Then these youngsters go out and do the dirty work for us and for the repressive dictatorship which most of them dislike and distrust. The dirty work, of course, is to kill other Vietnamese.

The President's form of Vietnamization will not end the war. It will prolong it. His form of Vietnamization does not mean that we are going to pull all our troops out. Some—including combat troops—will be in Vietnam indefinitely. A secret timetable is not a timetable at all; it is a device whereby an administration attempts to claim credit for the things it does, meanwhile hiding all that it isn't doing or could be doing faster. It is as if a railroad announced that all its trains were running on time—but refused to publish a timetable.

President Nixon's form of Vietnamization means we shall continue to prop up the Thieu-Ky clique—as repressive and unrepresentative today as it has ever been. I would support a policy of providing a truly representative government in South Vietnam with enough assistance to match the outside assistance given to insurgents who seek its overthrow. But the sad fact is that there is no representative government in Saigon, nor any sign that one will emerge in the future. The sad fact is that, instead of moving toward peace in Vietnam, we are simply moving toward another kind of war—a war that resembles on a much larger scale the conflict in Laos.

Unlike the war in Laos, the war in Vietnam is no secret. The American people are aware of it, hate it, and want us to get out of it. After a grace period for the Nixon Administration that lasted ten months, Americans and their elected officials renewed their demands for an end to that war.

Reacting to this pressure, the Administration began the gradual withdrawal of front-line American combat troops—while our air and support troops remain the same. Fewer American lives are being lost, the number of troops in Vietnam is going down instead of up, and the immediacy of the war begins to fade from public concern.

To keep it fading, the Administration has attacked the mass media—which has reported the war to the American people as its reporters have seen it. At the same time, reporters in Laos who tried to tell the story found that they had thereby forfeited some of their rights to protection as American citizens.

On February 24, the press reported that one plane per minute was leaving the secret American-run



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base at Long Cheng in Laos. It also revealed that many armed Americans in civilian clothes were active in the battle then sputtering on the Plain of Jars. The plucky reporters who filed that story were arrested by Laotians. And the American ambassador in Laos promptly declared: "The American Mission has lost any interest in the press whatsoever because of what happened this afternoon."

I was under the illusion that embassies overseas were supposed to protect American citizens, not to wash their hands of them. But the secrecy of this dirty little war has probably given Ambassador Godley the illusion that he is a Roman proconsul. It's no wonder then that he speaks more like Pontius Pilate than like an American official. It is the kind of mentality that got us into the Southeast Asian quagmire in the first place.

The American press continues to report on American activities in Laos and Vietnam. But it will take more than journalism to keep Laos from becoming another Vietnam, and to keep Vietnam from turning into a giant Laos. Specific steps must be taken:

¶All our fighting men must be withdrawn from both countries.

¶The withdrawal must be on a timetable announced in advance.

¶If a true representative government should come to power in South Vietnam, the United States should provide enough assistance to match the outside assistance given to insurgents seeking its overthrow.

It may be more hygienic for us at home to know that our tax dollars, which pay for bombs and napalm and foreign mercenaries, are responsible for more and more of the killing in Vietnam, and American foot soldiers for less and less. I submit that to the Vietnamese girl who is raped, it makes little difference whether Americans or South Vietnamese assault her. And it makes little difference to the people of a Vietnamese or Laotian village whether the American weapons that kill them are handled by American citizens or American mercenaries. They are dead; we helped kill them. Surely that is all that counts to those who may survive.

And it is all that should count for us. No matter how you slice it, or paper it over, or patch it up, this is an unjust, immoral and unnecessary war. I am truly sorry for the people of Southeast Asia who bear the burden of it. They deserve better leadership than either side in the conflict can give them. But we cannot select their governments for them, and we cannot order their societies for them. That is their responsibility, not ours.

Our first responsibility is to peace. The Nixon policy will not bring peace—it will only bring more war and more killing. As long as we continue to support an unpopular government in Saigon and as long as we refuse to send a top-level negotiator to Paris, there will be no peace in Vietnam.

Our second responsibility is to ourselves. And we cannot begin to meet that responsibility until we get our troops all the way out of Southeast Asia. The issue is not whether Americans fight the war or Vietnamese fight the war. The issue is the war itself. The issue cannot be diffused. It will not go away.

It will haunt the dreams of a generation of Americans for years to come. We shall not be whole again until it is ended. We must at last be true to the best in our heritage, not to the worst. □

UNDERGROUND PRESS

# CENSORSHIP BY HARASSMENT

**KINGSLEY WIDMER**

*Mr. Widmer, who teaches comparative literature at San Diego State College, is the author of the booklet,* The Experience of Freedom: Censorship and the Teacher *(American Federation of Teachers, Wash. D.C.). With Eleanor Widmer, he has edited the anthologies,* Literary Censorship *and* Culture and Freedom: Literary Censorship in the 70's *(both Wadsworth).*

*La Jolla, Calif.*

Much of the old censorship, in the form of state laws and local ordinances and administrative procedures, went down in the sixties. Part of this resulted from an enlarging judicial relief, a libertarian emphasis that some students of First Amendment interpretations believe may have run its course. Not only current political conservatism but the cyclic history of censorship supports this view. As of now, however, we still have considerable practical as well as legal freedom. It rears its head—some might prefer to say its behind—in the many minority and dissident publications labeled "underground." These represent a remarkable change in cultural style and social temper, but only at the margins of American order.

When the "underground" fails to keep its place, when it threatens to trouble the controlling order, it provokes new censoring ways. No very profound sense of American society and history is required to recognize that the pressures toward repression are many and powerful. When the more formal restrictions slacken, authoritarian control finds other means. Currently, I believe, these operate in two antithetical directions: the sophisticated structural controls of an indoctrinating institutional order, and when that approach falters, more gross illegal and



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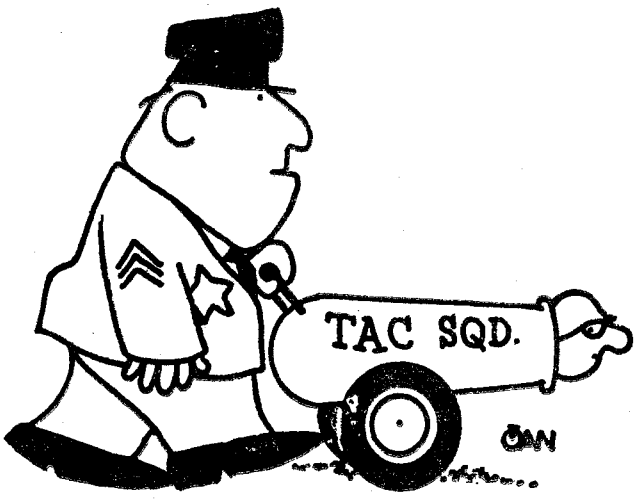
quasi-legal harassments. In the long run, a warping and domination of freedoms is more effective than mere suppression. The methods of corporate-bureaucratic organizations, exploitative mass media and technocratic dehumanizations do not usually emphasize censorship as such, but they achieve, often with unbeatable finesse, the ends of censorship. When that process works poorly, when the game becomes all too obvious, the cruder ways of pressure and restriction and punishment come into play.

For an example, I shall summarize the situation of underground journals in San Diego, Calif. One rather expects censorship in this major naval base and military procurement center, with its fantastic collection of superconservative politicians, its poor school system, its police department's history of corruption (confirmed again this year by a California attorney general's report), and the generally illiberal atmosphere of the Southern California retired and time-serving and resentful escapees to a fractured social community. From the violent silencing of labor organizers and Emma Goldman in the early years of the century to a campaign last year to oust Herbert Marcuse from the local branch of the University of California, virulent popular drives against dissent have set the tone. Literally every couple of years, there is some systematic drive for censorship in San Diego, though the ostensible objects vary from Communists to comics to blasphemers to hippies. That *is* the American heritage at the southern end of California.

In 1968, a bit later than in other areas, a group of young Left activists, some of them dropouts from the gigantic local state college and the small branch university, organized a *Free Press*. Though not the first underground paper in the area, it was less tightly centered on the "youth culture" and more overtly political than its predecessors. By the fall of 1969, it had partly refocused its abstract New Left rhetoric to attack specific issues in San Diego. It ran polemical exposés of the "power structure," including the exceptionally crass real estate and financial manipulators and the allied Copley Press. The latter controls, among other things, the only two daily newspapers in San Diego. Nationally as well as locally these are notorious for extreme hawkishness, for a general fatuousness beyond even conservative requirements, and for former editor Herb Klein, now Nixon's sly Director of Communications. Last November, the *San Diego Free Press*, under the new and mildly provocative name of *Street Journal*, emerged part way from the underground by becoming a weekly with a circulation reaching toward 10,000. In a kind of parody competition with the Copley Press, *Street Journal* moved its offices downtown, acquired more efficiency (including street-corner vending machines placed next to the daily newspaper dispensers) and took on an exuberant though rather thin neo-muckraking manner. Greater efficiency and visibility brought greater trouble, with the police and others. In an area as socially and politically crude as San Diego, the mere suggestion that dissent should presume to anything beyond a fringe role is certain to bring strong reaction.

A group linked to the *Street Journal*, sometimes sharing premises and activities, the Movement for a Democratic Military, started publishing last summer a GI paper, *Duck Power*, aimed at Navy and Marine dissidents. Its editors, present and former military personnel, carry on their own special warfare with officials of the Naval District, the Shore Patrol, righteous members of the military caste and, they claim, with other federal agencies. The sheer nerve of GIs taking on the military, with its rigidities and punitive responses, merits special combat commendation (see John Rechy, "The Army Fights an Idea," *The Nation*, January 12).

A list of the "incidents" that have beset those putting out the *Street Journal* and *Duck Power* in the last three months would run to many pages. Here are a few examples. A fund-raising party for *Street Journal* (November 23) was disrupted by San Diego police officers, who searched residential as well as publishing premises without a warrant. On Christmas, the paper's offices were vandalized in a highly professional manner, publishing equipment being damaged to the extent of $4,000 to $5,000. The police, to put it generously, were not helpful. Nor were they more effective in discovering who bombed a staff member's car (January 3), or who committed the other attacks on the paper's offices (November 18 and 29). However, the police were quite able to convince a landlord not to rent to the group (December 28 and in March), to maintain nuisance surveillance of the shop and staff (except during




burglaries and bombings), and to arrest staff members on such charges as blocking the street (two people talking together), possessing a tattered driver's license (though on foot at the time), wearing improper dress (an army shoulder patch), and littering the streets (by dropping a cigarette butt).

When editors of *Street Journal* complain either



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about crimes committed against them or about police malevolence, those complaining are followed, questioned and sometimes arrested (January 9, 14, etc.). *Duck Power* people run a similar gantlet, including arrests for illegal assembly (January 11), with others arrested for inquiring about the arrests and with a forced and messy search of premises without warrants (January 15 and February 8). GIs merely in the presence of Movement for a Democratic Military organizers are picked up by the police, without charges, and turned over to the Shore Patrol. If others inquire about arrested friends, they in turn are handed over to the Shore Patrol (January 16) or arrested for interfering with an arrest (February 8). Repeatedly, street sellers of both papers are stopped and questioned by the police; often they are arrested for "blocking a public sidewalk," though the city ordinance under which this is done was declared unconstitutional last fall. As one might predict, the newspaper vending machines are regularly smashed or disappear—sometimes to turn up in the police department's lost and found office. A less political and ambitious San Diego underground paper, *The Free Door to Liberation*, has suffered repeated and systematic vandalism (December 15, 28, January 14), though less direct troubles with the police.

Complaints on all such matters to San Diego officials, both by the *Street Journal* people and by "straight" citizens, are ill-received and produce little improvement. Reportedly, one official silenced a mildly inquiring citizen with the question, "What do you think would happen to these kids if it were put to a citizen's referendum in San Diego?" The chilling potentialities of such democracy discourage argument.

The *Street Journal* editors speculate in print about connections between the police harassment, the criminal damages to premises and equipment, and their muckraking attacks on the local "power structure"—with keenest suspicions being directed toward the Copley Press. No hard evidence for such associations seems available, nor does it seem necessary. Conspiracies are possible, but young leftists, like old rightists, often display a proclivity for somewhat paranoid patterns of explanation.

The widespread American hostility to dissenters, aggravated by the rightist political rhetoric that dominates areas like San Diego and focused by the epithets and crudities of the underground papers, plus the decline in recourse to formal and traditional means of restriction, could sufficiently motivate the illegal and quasi-legal harassment. The underground press is not alone in suffering from an unequal application of the laws and police powers. The overlap of official and vigilante persecutions is not uncommon. Furthermore, though the young *Street Journal* people think of themselves as strongly political, they can be more fully defined by their "counter culture" roles. They symbolize, as well as appeal to, the dissident young, and that alone would make them objects of considerable hostility.

Supposedly, the countering young split these days into political and cultural dissidents—militants vs. mystics, revolutionary cultures vs. "head" culture, activists vs. addicts. These differences exist but rarely in such simple ways. The *Street Journal* staff call themselves a "People's Commune" and live in what might be described as an experimental utopian extended family. Though anarcho-Marxist in some of their political ideology and diction, and polemicists in their paper against class control and economic power, they reveal in conversation rather greater commitment to cultural revolution than to what is usually defined as politics. Their domestic arrangements, dress, manners and sensibility—in sum, what is now called life style—get most of their political significance by being anti-political in any usual senses. The somewhat revolutionary rhetoric serves as a stylization for cultural and social rebellion. The more perceptive members of the People's Commune seem implicitly to recognize that the main hostilities they engender belong to the current American civil war miscalled the "generational conflict."

That they holler "censorship" and "political repression"—the usual battlefield designations in this civil war—can be misleading. As an organizer of "San Diego Faculty to Defend Freedom of the Press," I run into the same contradictions as they do between "liberal" traditions and underground realities. "Liberal straights" may support freedom of the press for the *Street Journal* and *Duck Power* and *Free Door*, but some of them would also impose their own quite different manners. They ask that the papers "clean up their language," "quit using such crude insults," "stop the far-out stuff" and "stick to serious issues." But if the actual conflicts center on life styles, such "decency" and "seriousness" are covert ways to reject the real differences and dissent. Many middle-aged "liberals" these days finally find themselves to be on the conservative side, less from matters of age than ways of life.

Just as traditional methods of censorship declined, so the traditional arguments in defense of dissent seem in decline. The utility once attributed to dissent, the historical and rational effects in the line of John Stuart Mill, no longer well apply. Now minority views less serve general social change than the creation of countering para-communities. Those who would defend liberty and tolerance, with an emphasis on recognized political ends, find themselves put to the task of redefining those principles to encompass new life styles and alien ways of behavior. The new censorship calls for the opposition of a new libertarianism.

The underground newspapers in San Diego, as elsewhere, will probably continue, unless police harassment and vigilante attacks considerably increase. Almost cynically, one can note that the "powers of order" have also reached a post-liberal



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phase in which the more sophisticated among them understand that they need not require verbal and style conformity from students and the underground in order to maintain control. In this implicit understanding, as in much else, the many San Diegos of America are, of course, a bit retarded. But stupidity is also effective. The pressures against the underground papers work in several ways. Understandably, the papers become centered on their own defense, increasing their stridency and decreasing their ability to reach out to a larger community. And while the attacks on the papers and communes win them some support, they also reveal the declining pertinence and effectiveness of the liberal tradition when faced with radical phenomena.

In my experience, the conventionally well-intentioned civil libertarians more and more display despairing weakness or fearful apathy or conservative redefinition. Much of what passed for liberalism a decade ago—and this seems especially evident among academicians and writers and the related liberal-labor-ethnic blocs—really can't relate to the blacks and the deserters and the disrupters and the counterculturers. The underground activities continue, less because of liberal defense and libertarian possibilities than because of the intense needs of the dissident. Given the ambivalence and ineffectiveness of what was once a broad and self-confident liberal response, my guess is that more "'new censorship" will be added to the erratic repression and systematic exploitation of the underculture by the disintegrating mainline American society. □

COMMUNITY CHESTS

# THE IGNORANT PHILANTHROPISTS

**BEATRICE DINERMAN**

*Miss Dinerman is co-author of* Southern California Metropolis *(University of California Press). She directed a three-year Ford Foundation study into the ways in which voluntary welfare agencies use the donations they receive from the public. The present article is based on that investigation.*

In the next few months, the American public will once more become the target of one of the greatest seductions in history. It occurs each year, when a full-blown, high-pressure advertising campaign attempts to stimulate or shame us into making some contribution to our local Community Chest or United Way Fund. A sense of duty will be activated by resounding statements of support from the President of the United States, state governors, local mayors and city councilmen. Compassion will be awakened by mass displays of photographs depicting wide-eyed, hungry children and the lonely, despondent aged. "Togetherness" will be triggered when we are asked to do all we can to help meet the "office quota." And throughout, we will experience a vague but persistent sense of guilt for what we have that others do not.

All in all, it will be a *good* seduction, but, as with all successful seductions, our response will be emotional, not rational. That is the danger.

The idea of united giving to help the needy has become so much a part of American society that even the most hardheaded contributors fail to ask whether their donations are indeed being spent wisely. They assume that someone, somewhere, will use the money to the best possible advantage.

What actually happens to the more than $700 million collected each year by Community Chests and United Funds across the country? Who decides how this money is to be spent? Where are these people located? How competent are they? Is your donation well spent, or is it mismanaged through incompetence or squandered for political ends? The average contributor knows little of such things and questions less.

United giving is a substitute for the numerous, uncoordinated fund drives which hundreds of social service-type, charitable agencies would otherwise have to conduct annually in order to survive. Separate fund-raising campaigns are a drain on the resources of even the largest charitable organizations, and are often prohibitive for the less affluent agencies. It was therefore logical to suppose that the formation of a separate body, whose sole purpose is to solicit financial support for the varied and diverse social causes within a community, would improve the financial drawing power of all such causes. As a bonus, the donor public is relieved of constant demands for contributions—one annual check covers this aspect of civic responsibility. So it was that Community Chest organizations appeared, and were often expanded into United Way associations, which include a number of formerly independent Chest operations.

But there is a "catch": the coordinated fund-raising body also assumes the power to decide what percentage of the total amount collected each member agency shall receive. This "filtering" process is conducted through an often intricate system of committees whose members evaluate the performance of community agencies and assess their requests for financial support. The committees are manned by



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nonprofessional volunteers called "lay leaders," who are generally citizens prominent in the community, or the wives of such citizens serving in a voluntary capacity.

In theory, the system is ideal. A body of dedicated men and women, representing the donor public, and carefully weighing a supposedly voluminous amount of facts and figures on agency performance and service needs, allocate the donations of their fellows for the greatest possible alleviation of pressing community problems. In practice, it is a system often characterized by stagnation and incompetence.

The trouble begins with the volunteers. The typical nonprofessional decision maker is a well-established family man having some religious attachment and more often than not a banker, insurance executive, business manager or entrepreneur. He is politically conservative, markedly prosperous, almost invariably white. More important, he tends to know little about social welfare issues, to be apathetic and often critical of the whole idea of welfare. But he has money or, at least, access to the money of others; that is the real reason why he was invited to serve.

Lay persons appointed to positions of authority in a given Community Chest usually must meet three qualifications: sufficient time to devote to Chest activities (a requirement that immediately excludes a large portion of the working population); business experience and/or a knowledge of finance (partly because the popular wisdom equates intellect with business acumen and partly because business connections are a source of financial support), and community status, estimated largely in terms of the ability to raise funds.

Since the knowledge needed for a valid assessment of agency performance is *not* a requirement, the volunteer is apt to develop a deep sense of insecurity. "Most times I feel as though I'm floundering around in a sea of uncertainty," says one lay leader. Another, more acute businessman describes his role as that of a "puppet who doesn't know what the hell is going on but makes things look good by just being there." Still another volunteer freely admits, "I haven't the vaguest idea what all those figures mean." The banker, the insurance executive, the socially prominent housewife can none of them even begin to judge the performance of competing agencies, since they know little, if anything, about the goals, techniques and, most important of all, the *results* of the work the agencies do. And they are in no position to identify the gaps and deficiencies in the services provided, since they are ill-informed about existing community problems.

Their incompetence is further compounded by extreme apathy. Energy, ingenuity and creativity, far from being a prerequisite for selection, can actually hamper the lay leader's chances for a Chest budgetary position. Mavericks, in the form of people who seek to improve the system by questioning what was done in the past, are generally weeded out. It follows that the Chest budgetary structure must be a highly passive body.

The futility of entrusting these people with responsibility for determining broad community welfare policies by the way they allocate funds is compounded by an emphasis on the "big business approach." Says one volunteer: "There's too much wishy-washy sentimentality in welfare today. What we need is a hard-nosed, common sense approach used by the businessman who has proven his worth by successfully running his own enterprise."

In practice, this "common sense" approach to welfare allocations has produced excessive concern with petty details. In his search for "hard-nosed reality," the businessman skims over the nature of the existing needs and a given agency's ability to meet them. This keen watchdog of conference expenses, mileage allowances and secretarial wages, will rarely question such substantive items as a new experimental case work program, the geographical proximity of two agencies providing identical services to an identical clientele, or the value of constructing a new halfway house, in light of prevailing professional opinion concerning the effectiveness of such institutions.

Thus a basic lack of knowledge is coupled with a profit and loss approach to operations whose success or failure cannot be measured in dollars. The businessman understands mileage expenditures and secretarial salaries, but he has not the vaguest idea of how to evaluate a social service program.

Inadequate knowledge, apathy and pettiness are bad enough, but when an evident flavor of reaction is added to the mixture, the objectives of human and community betterment can well be destroyed. "Why the hell should we give handouts to the poor," snaps the vice president of a leading investment firm, unable to control his contempt. "I came from a poor family, grew up in the streets like the rest of them, and pulled myself out of the gutter without asking for any charity. Now that I've made it, you're damn right I resent being asked to give a free ride to a bunch of louts."

"The moral fiber of our people is being ruined by paternalism." The sonorous voice of a prominent real estate entrepreneur resounds through his paneled office. "The idea of what a person *needs* has been blown up all out of proportion. First, there was talk about everyone being entitled to food, shelter

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and clothing. Soon, this grew to include a good education, a comfortable home and the 'right' kind of job. If you let those dimwitted social workers have their way, everyone would be entitled to three cars, a servant and a private psychoanalyst! Not that I'm a cruel man. I certainly don't like to see people go hungry. But . . . 'need,' as far as I'm concerned, should be limited to outright starvation. Apart from that, it's every man for himself."

"But think of the children," the matron's eyes mist over as she twists her large diamond ring anxiously. "They can't be held responsible for their present state of affairs. The evil doings of their parents are to blame. If only it were possible to remove these children from their parents' custody, as a legal requirement for receiving public assistance. After all, spending money on the *adult* poor is such a waste, what with their drinking and carrying on and such."

These statements were made, not by some ancient survivors from the era of rugged individualism but by three committee members charged with allocating funds for one of the largest United Funds in the country! And these ultraconservative lay leaders, reactionary to the point of being archaic, reflect the thinking of a good many of their colleagues.

Some frankly state that their sole purpose in participating is to assure themselves that the donations aren't being wasted on unnecessary social service "frills." Others attribute their participation to a desire to prevent further expansion of "big government." They would strengthen voluntary programs as the "lesser of two evils." Still others have so narrow a definition of dependency that their participation in any welfare program is questionable.

People of this caliber are selected, in part, because it is difficult to find competent, well-informed members of the community who are willing and able to devote a considerable portion of their time to Chest activities. But as important is the fact that a truly vital group of volunteers might well upset the financial balance of power by challenging the sincerity of allocative decisions now based, in large part, on political considerations. The second major indictment to be levied against Community Chest operations is the ease with which they substitute the goal of empire building and organizational survival for that of community betterment.

"Come off your ivory tower and see what the real world looks like before you judge us," the budget director of a leading United Fund retorts. "Sure, it would be great if we could allocate funds on the basis of a true appraisal of performance and results, but we're not living in a fairyland. Let's face it—the Chest needs money to exist, and if this money comes in from people who think the Campfire Girls or the Boy Scouts are the only way to fly, what harm does it do to plow some of this money back into scouting-type programs?"

That is a very real problem in most Community Chest organizations. Over the years, Chest-supported agencies gain a reputation that is based largely on their financial superiority to competing agencies. This strength or influence is measured in terms of the amount of money each agency's supporters are able to amass for the Chest during its annual fund-raising campaign. So, if the Community Chest is dependent on the financial support of a group of contributors affiliated with a given agency, the question of evaluating the performance of that agency on the basis of the value of its work becomes academic. There is no real choice to be made: a form of financial blackmail has already dictated the decision to continue support.

That is why a Boy Scout troop operating in one of the wealthiest cities in the United States can receive substantial support from the Chest, while a case work agency located in a nearby poverty-stricken neighborhood must often beg for its very sustenance. The effect of such financial considerations is apparent in the "lopsided" allocations to various types of services made by United Funds throughout the country. In 1968, the United Community Funds and Councils of America reported that 341 United Funds spent an average of 35.3 per cent of their contributions for recreation services of the Boy Scout variety. In contrast, basic services related to children and general dependency received only 25.7 per cent, and health programs were allocated a mere 12.6 per cent. On a per capita basis, 447 United Funds spent an average of $1.45 per person for recreation services—many of which are pointed toward middle-class children—as compared with 72c for children's services and general dependency, and 43c for health services.

Thus the supposedly difficult and delicate process of distributing Community Chest contributions becomes little more than a charade designed to lull the lay decision maker into the belief that he is, in fact, reaching monumental decisions. In practice, the professional members of the Chest staff set the broad limits within which specific allocative decisions are reached. And, politically astute staff members almost invariably press to maintain the *status quo* in order to assure the financial stability of the Chest operation and, as a by-product, the security of their own positions.

Should one then stop contributing to the local Community Chest? That would be *retreating* from the problem, not solving it. A cutback in funds would only deprive the poor and the needy still more, while leaving the lay leader untouched and the archaic system intact. What are the alternatives?

First, the donating public must rid itself of an archaic machinery that elevates the lay leader to a position of critical importance. In this complex society, we need specifically trained people to maintain everything from our home air conditioner to our business dealings, to our foreign affairs. We have accepted the benefits of specialization in almost



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every aspect of social and public life. Why, then, do we hamper progress on voluntary social welfare matters by maintaining the fiction that the average citizen can attend to the charitable needs of the community? It might have been true when "charity" consisted of donating a Christmas basket of food to the poorer families. Today, a great variety of professional skills is needed.

We must enlist such skills in Community Chest deliberations. (At present, Community Chest panels generally include but a few such professionals, as "token" appointments.) The expert who is up to the job will use his professional leverage to reward certain agencies for exceptional performance and far-reaching programs, eliminate other agencies that lack innovative spirit, and stimulate the lay leader who now views his Chest experience as little more than a social occasion or prestige symbol.

This does not mean that the nonprofessional volunteer should be pushed aside entirely. In every Community Chest and United Fund throughout the country there are a few lay leaders who have considerable knowledge, a consuming interest in community affairs, and a liberal philosophy toward those in need. For the most part, they are now disenchanted, seeing blatant deficiencies in the irrational distribution of the available funds. This type of volunteer, if sufficiently stimulated and supported, could assume an active leadership role.

But suppose a community brought in the experts, stimulated a corps of advanced leaders toward more dynamic action, and conducted a true assessment of the comparative worth of each agency receiving Chest support. Would it do any good? Or would the Chest still not dare to drop an agency, no matter how ineffective, if its program had strong financial backers who could retaliate by cutting off their contributions to the Community Chest?

It is not at all certain that these backers really retaliate, or that, if they did, the withdrawal of funds would be crippling to the Community Chest operation. The financial power of certain agencies, such as the Boy Scouts, has been greatly exaggerated.

The threat of financial reprisal is open to serious question, if only because it has rarely been tested —financial support for strong, long-standing agencies is seldom if ever curtailed, let alone eliminated. It is suggestive, however, when the Los Angeles YMCA, considered a particularly effective money-raiser, left the Community Chest in 1950, a much feared drop in the Chest's fund-raising capability did not follow. In fact, within the next five years, the Los Angeles Community Chest *increased* its annual take by a full $2 million.

So, just as a county supervisor never *really* knows that a tax hike will cause his downfall at the next election—and just as the little boy who threatens to punch his playmate in the nose never *really* knows if his friend will punch him back—so few Chests can state with certainty that elimination of support for a given agency will be damaging.

Community Chest organizations have two courses of action open to them. They can test these threats and make a concerted effort to live up to their tremendous potential. That would require courage to withstand the pressure of political repercussions, imagination to recruit new sources of financial support if necessary, and patience to persuade and re-educate both present and potential supporters to the positive assets of assuming a more dynamic posture. A much easier choice is to continue operating in an atmosphere of stagnancy, indecisiveness and fear. □

## LETTERS *(Continued from page 354)*

Guyana; mine is 20 Croal Street Enterprise, East Coast Demerara, Guyana.

*Indrowtie Ramsawack*

### Kelsoism

*New York City*

Dear Sirs: Kelso's plan, according to Robert G. Sherrill ("Louis Kelso: Nut or Newton?" *The Nation*, Mar. 2), would require an annual growth rate of 15 per cent to 20 per cent over a period of twenty-five to thirty years. I assume this refers to the gross national product. Well, 15 per cent annually added to the GNP would double it in five years; 20 per cent in four. Carrying this forward over Kelso's twenty-five-to-thirty-year revolution would mean a GNP somewhere between thirty-two and 128 times the present one.

Thirty-two times *what?* Thirty-two times as many automobiles and highways, thirty-two times as many IBMs? I assume that the 20 per cent annual dividends on which the revolution depends will be obtained by industry producing something and selling it to somebody. Producing what, and selling it to whom?

Again, America is *now* using about one-third of the world's raw material production (with 6 per cent of the world's population!). What raw material resources would support a thirty-two-fold expansion of production?

Finally, there is the ecological aspect. Other things being equal, the disruption of a nation's environment is in direct ratio to the GNP; the mind boggles at what a thirty-two-fold expansion would do.

*Quos Deus vult perdere, prius dementat*—and Kelso's "revolution," I think, is the final dementia of capitalist boosterism. . . .

*Robert Claiborne*

### correction

*New York City*

Dear Sirs: Contrary to the statement on page 215 of your Feb. 23 issue, Prof. William L. Langer is alive and well and living in Cambridge, Mass. In fact, his latest book, *Political and Social Upheaval*, was published last year.

*Hugh Van Dusen*
*Harper & Row*



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# BOOKS & THE ARTS

## Immigrants in Time

CULTURE AND COMMITMENT: A Study of the Generation Gap. *By Margaret Mead. Natural History Press/ Doubleday & Co. 110 pp. $5.*

**PETER CLECAK**
*Mr. Clecak teaches English and American culture at the University of California (Irvine), and is at work on a book on contemporary American social criticism.*

After an evening seminar last autumn, I walked toward the campus parking lot with a group of students. Suddenly, one of them ran over to a car, spoke briefly with the driver, and then rejoined us. "That was my mother. Her class on 'the generation gap' just let out," the girl remarked, adding wryly: "She kicked me out of the house three weeks ago." The incident suggests the elusive character of a subject at once inescapable and futile. The generation gap is an immediate fact—in all too many cases a tragic fact—that causes anguish on each side. And it requires immediate, makeshift solutions. The mother must know "how to deal with the situation," since the simple act of eviction will not do. And in the presence of her peers, the daughter must pretend not to care. The best they can hope for is an uneasy truce, without benefit of elaborate theory or extensive social change.

The volumes of conflicting testimony on generational conflict might suggest that if the ignorance and biases could be cleared away, tensions between parents and their children would subside. But matters are not so simple. Although discussion may ease tensions, it usually fails to clarify issues. Momentary catharsis comes at the heavy price of compounding ignorance and misunderstanding—and ironically, of creating new frustrations. Paradoxically, then, the subject precludes the lucid perspectives it demands, and not only because the participants lack emotional distance. They confront one another over narrow, semi-conscious and conflicting views of the world. And so the theorists step in to perform the badly needed service of clarifying the sources of conflict and proposing remedies. Most only add to the confusion. When not ignored, the critics inevitably become weapons in the generational war.

In *Culture and Commitment*, Margaret Mead joins the discussion at a higher level of sophistication. Assuming throughout that the generation gap takes different shapes in different cultures, she thus avoids reductive psychological and historical approaches that guarantee incomplete, distorted analyses. Though latent in the oedipal situation, generational conflict need not be expressed in the open rebellion of the young. It is therefore "natural" and "eternal" only in the limited sense of constituting a human potentiality. Nor does Mead assume that the generation gap is *merely* the disease of particular social systems. It proceeds from a complex interplay of psychological and social factors best understood through a comparative study of human cultures.

From this sensible perspective, Mead argues that the postwar generation gap is part of a larger failure in the mechanisms of cultural transmission. Immediately after World War II, she observes, the central problem of the young was *identity*: "it was becoming harder and harder for any individual then growing up to find his or her place within the conflicting versions of our culture and within the world that was already pressing in upon us through television. . . ." Now, the "central problem is *commitment*: to what past, present, or future can the idealistic young commit themselves?"

Clearly the two needs—for identity and commitment—form interrelated aspects of a cultural whole. The inaccessibility of a stable identity raises the problem of commitment and introduces the option of noncommitment. Moreover, in this period of a global culture, as the theoretical choice of models expands, problems of identity and commitment take on a new urgency. In the absence of compelling adult models, the generation gap widens. Though promising in some respects, then, the beginnings of a worldwide culture intensify generational conflict everywhere: "A profound disturbance is occurring in the relationships between the strong and the weak, the possessors and the dispossessed, elder and younger, and those who have knowledge and skill and those who lack them. The secure belief [of] those who had authority over those who did not has been shaken."

Without yielding to hysteria, the book conveys the sense that a decent future requires the attenuation of generational conflict. Mead understands—and even emphasizes—the generous impulses in men, while at the same time recognizing the tragic ironies that must discourage any intelligent observer of the general direction of civilization. Admiring the surgeons who devote months to restoring a badly scarred child, she also knows that their efforts occur in "a country engaged each day in a war in which more children are burned with napalm than such hospitals save in a year." Such typical ironies force her to ask whether we are "trapped within a set of inventions called civilization that is now so well supported by technology and population expansion that we must follow a predetermined course to destruction, just as all earlier civilizations did, but this time on a planetary scale which will end the history" of man.

Though it is unanswerable, the question can never be far from the critic's consciousness. Fortunately, Mead resists (with some success) the dialectic between blind hope and fatalistic despair, preferring instead to oppose the drift toward nightmare with an exercise of critical intelligence. No *deus ex machina* concealed in the historical wings can rescue "man" from his tragic potential. Only men, using their intelligence to widen and apply their knowledge. As Mead puts it: "The prophet who fails to present a bearable alternative and yet preaches doom is part of the trap that he postulates."

To fulfill the general aim of illuminating the current generation gap, Mead organizes the book into three sections, each describing a dominant pattern of transmitting identity and the possibility of commitment to the young. In "postfigurative" cultures, "children learn primarily from their forbears." In "cofigurative" models, "both children and adults learn from their peers." And in "prefigurative" cultures, "adults also learn from their children."

The essential characteristic of a postfigurative culture is "the assumption, expressed by members of the older generation in their every act, that their way of life (however many changes may, in fact, be embodied in it) is unchanging, eternally the same." Typically, three generations—grandparents, parents and children—co-exist in a permanent configuration. The living continuously revise the past, incorporating change into a culture that maintains the appearance of continuity. Since the elders provide living models for the young, the problems of identity and commitment do not present themselves as individual concerns; for most, the



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"solutions" reside in the cultural matrix: "The answers to the questions: *Who am I? What is the nature of my life as a member of my culture; how do I speak and move, eat and sleep, make a living, become a parent, meet my death* are experienced as predetermined." Since the cultural forms are imprinted on individuals "naturally" through their concrete experience of the round of life, the postfigurative pattern sustains itself as long as the young do not question their culture and remain largely unconscious of its ways.

The relationships between the generations need not be smooth. In some postfigurative cultures the young are expected to rebel. However disruptive, the planned rebellions form part of a total and predictable design in which the young essentially reproduce the lives of the old. Co-figurative patterns have their beginnings "in a break in the postfigurative system." The fissure may be opened by a variety of causes, including a natural catastrophe in which the elder leadership is wiped out; by new, disruptive forms of technology; by conquest, migration, religious conversion or revolution. In each case, a new set of conditions lessens the value of the received models. Children can no longer look unquestioningly to their parents or other elders in the community, since in pioneer situations there are no models to follow.

According to Mead, generational conflict in a co-figurative culture "arises when the new methods of rearing children are found to be insufficient or inappropriate for the formation of a style of adulthood which the first generation, the pioneers, had hoped their children would follow." In time, the co-figurative pattern may be institutionalized through age-grading, public schools and the like. Still, in mobile, class societies, "problems of generational conflict are endemic": when parents expect their children to seek more prestigious occupations, they send them to schools that modify personal and cultural styles. In turn, the changes in characteristic modes of behavior acquired in schools generate modifications in basic character structure. Even parents who approve of the direction taken by their children cannot share their experiences emotionally. (A university student, for example, requires very little actual experience on campus to realize that her mother has almost nothing to show her about college life.) The facts of change, no less than the continuous expectations of change, create a permanent gap between the generations. Only the degree and intensity vary.

Mead argues that the rapid pace of social change in the postwar world and the emergence of a genuinely worldwide culture have invalidated post-figurative and even co-figurative models. Massive changes now occur regularly *within* the lives of individuals, cutting each generation off from its predecessor: "Today, everyone born before World War II is . . . an immigrant in time—as his forbears were in space—struggling to grapple with the unfamiliar conditions of life in a new era." The generation gap thus assumes a qualitatively new shape on a global scale:

> Today, nowhere in the world are there elders who know what the children know, no matter how remote and simple the societies are in which the children live. In the past there were always some elders who knew more than any children in terms of their experience of having grown up within a cultural system. Today there are none. It is not only that parents are no longer guides, but that there are no guides, whether one seeks them in one's own country or abroad. There are no elders who know what those who have been reared within the last twenty years know about the world into which they were born.

This wholly novel situation calls for a different cultural style which Mead terms the prefigurative: "In this new culture it will be the child—and not the parent and grandparent that represents what is to come." The rapid oscillation of life styles creates new limitations and new imperatives. Although parents can no longer teach the young "what to learn," they must show them "how to learn." Instead of prescribing specific commitments, the parents must teach "the value of commitment." Mead uses the unborn child to illustrate the new relationships between parents and their children. Although little can be known about it, the unborn child requires delicate care. Similarly, she suggests, we can "construct an environment in which a child, still unknown, can be safe and can grow and discover himself and the world." Instead of transmitting outmoded cultural forms, then, parents must re-create the conditions for the development of new identities and new commitments in each generation. Without such prefigurative models, Mead contends, the permanent gap between the generations will assume increasingly destructive forms.

The crucial failures of Mead's analysis and prognosis follow from her inability to demonstrate the actual bases for the prefigurative model. By contending that "our present situation is unique, without any parallel in the past," she tries to distinguish herself from other critics who interpret the current generation gap as merely an intensification of older, co-figurative patterns. But the best evidence she musters is the vague and innocuous claim that "the generation gap is worldwide."

Particular events in diverse countries —China, England, Pakistan, Japan, the United States, France, New Guinea— cannot sufficiently explain the "unrest that is stirring modern youth everywhere." Technological change, revolution, counterrevolution, the failure of old creeds and the attraction of new ones "serve only as partial explanations of the particular forms taken by youth revolt in different countries." Hence, "it is necessary to strip the occurrences in each country of their superficial, national, and immediately temporal aspects." Mead summarizes her essentialist thesis neatly: "The desire for a liberated form of communism in Czechoslovakia, the search for 'racial' equality in the United States, the desire to liberate Japan from military influence, the support given to excessive conservatism in Northern Ireland and Rhodesia or to the excesses of communism in Cuba—all these are particularistic forms. Youthful activism is common to them all."

Essentialist criticism ought not be summarily dismissed. The method of abstracting essential relationships from the bewildering mass of concrete particulars can yield impressive results (as, for example, in the case of Marx). But only if the critic selects the "right" features of the social whole and then proceeds to modify his initial abstractions with a series of qualifying assumptions based on detailed empirical investigation. Mead fails on both counts. She assumes (mistakenly, I think) that *a common* element is *the essential* element. Though it is probably too sweeping to claim that it happens "everywhere," "youthful activism" does occur on a global scale but with obvious and important national and cultural differences. So do a lot of other spectacular phenomena, including rapid technological change, revolution and counterrevolution.

Why, then, defoliate the global social landscape to focus on the "worldwide youth rebellion" as "the explanatory principle"? The reasons are too complex to sort out here. But two considerations strike me as fundamental. The increased awareness of the interdependence of people and nations requires that social critics grasp problems on a global scale. The main issue of our time *is* human survival and the creation of a decent world. Since the world now actually presents itself as Hegelian, the critic requires global vision: "The truth is the whole," as Hegel declared.

Paradoxically, however, the truth remains inaccessible, since the individual critic's vision of the whole is hopelessly inadequate to the complex and enormous realities. He lacks the categories of structured vision as well as the means to demonstrate hypotheses as sweeping as Mead's. While the essentialist mode still



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serves as a beginning of social analysis, it often leads the critic toward myth rather than toward science. Instead of being tested and qualified, the highly abstract hypotheses are fashioned into myths that explain—in a highly simplified fashion—the sources of individual and social unrest.

If the analyses drift toward myth, so do the solutions. As Mead suggests at the outset: "The prophet who fails to present a bearable alternative and yet preaches doom is part of the trap that he postulates." Typically, when the global problems of the present seem—and are—overwhelming, critics either withdraw into private despair or imagine solutions in—*and by*—the future. For a number of contemporary social critics —including Herbert Marcuse, Theodore Roszak, N. O. Brown, and to a lesser extent, Mead—youth has taken on the mythical role of a modern cavalry galloping to the rescue of an embattled world civilization. As the living embodiment of an unknown future, young people become the missing element in an otherwise hopeless characterization of the world. They are also the moving element; hence, Mead focuses on the current generation gap as the potential engine of "rapid, revolutionary" change. In spite of her intentions, she finally posits a *deus ex machina*.

Only the young—especially the rebellious minority—fully realize that the old ways of solving major social problems no longer work: "The past for them is a colossal, unintelligible failure, and the future may hold nothing but the destruction of the planet. Caught between the two, they are ready to make way for something new by a kind of social bulldozing. . . ." Now, Mead points out at least two crucial flaws in her alternative that make it unbearable, or at least impractical. "The young do not know what must be done, but they feel that there must be a better way." Secondly, their lack of power matches their lack of knowledge: "those who have no power also have no routes to power except through those against whom they are rebelling."

Instead of pursuing a new direction from this impasse, however, Mead presents the contradiction as a conclusion: "Effective, rapid revolutionary change, in which no one is guillotined and no one is forced into exile, depends upon the co-operation of a large number of those in power with the dispossessed who are seeking power." Her prefigurative model is designed to serve as a bridge between the old and the young, the powerful and the powerless, the dark present and a brighter future. The young represent an unknown and unknowable future. If there are to be massive revolutionary solutions to massive problems, the young must discover them. And the elders who have failed must redeem themselves by facilitating the transfer of power.

In an obvious sense, of course, Mead is right: the young *do* embody the future. Moreover, in advanced Western countries (and probably elsewhere as well), they are poorly equipped—at home and at school—for their difficult roles as inheritors of an unstable world. But surely they cannot create a wholly new reality. Nor should they be expected to. The problem of human survival may not be solvable. It is certain that whatever partial solutions emerge will not depend on one generation of social bulldozers backed up by a chorus of elders cheering on the side lines of a global construction site.

Though stated in social terms, Mead's analysis and prescriptions finally become parts of a quasi-aesthetic document. The critical terminology partially disguises the mythical content, lending it an air of credibility. But the force of the myth comes *via* the aesthetic form in which the terrors of the present modulate into a hopeful, though highly tentative, vision of the future.

The myth, however, is not very convincing, if only because of the thin social surface of the book. For example, Mead claims to go beyond others who see the future as no more than an extension of the past. Yet the entire schema she


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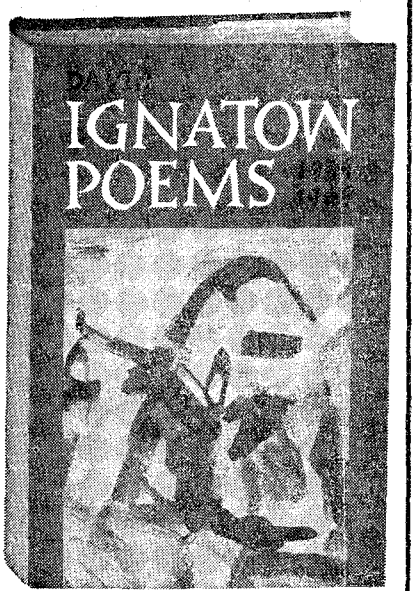


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presents—of post-, co-, and prefigurative patterns—has its own inner logic and conventional symmetry. Although it allows for an unknowable future, the prefigurative model constitutes a quasi-aesthetic extension and resolution of the previous two patterns. It may be an emotionally satisfying form imposed on a confusing world. It may give the illusion that the present impasse will end. Yet when one tries to imagine translating the solution into social practice, the myth loses its power.

Perhaps my criticism only confirms one of Mead's leading assumptions—the impossibility of imagining the future in terms of the past. Still, she illustrates her own assumption while claiming to escape its implications. And in the process, the present virtually disappears from her sparse critical landscape. It becomes a nightmare between a secure post-figurative past and an unknown prefigurative future. Masking as social criticism, the myth of youth presumably exorcises the nightmare. Finally, however, the unconscious aesthetic dimension fails. For men live and act in the present—in the "superficial, national, and immediately temporal aspects" of things. And it is in this crevice between past and future that men must try to survive and flourish. Mead's post-figurative and co-figurative schema yield many important insights before they dissolve into an unproductive and, for me, unsettling myth. □

# Imaginary Pockets

HARD TIMES: An Oral History of the Great Depression. *By Studs Terkel. Pantheon Books. 462 pp. $8.95.*

**NELSON ALGREN**
*Mr. Algren is the author of* The Man with the Golden Arm *and* A Walk on the Wild Side.

"The Depression has been filtered through by my parents. This purple heart in their background has become a justification for their present affluence. If we got the idea they didn't have it so bad, they'd have less psychological control over us. That's why they don't approve of hippies."—*Tad, 20.*

"Money is one of my father's big values. He wishes he were a millionaire. I don't think of money that way. I think of it as a sideline."—*Nancy, 21.*

"I have repudiated the kind of life my parents were forced into. I repudiate the lessons they learned."—*Steve, 21.*

"And at the beginning, when I was joining the demonstrations, they were afraid my father would lose his job. Fear was so obvious you could taste it—that you were going to do something which might wreck your chance of achieving the economic success they never had—that fear shaped their lives and consciences."—*Marshall, 23.*

*Hard Times: An Oral History of the Great Depression* could have been titled *Fathers and Children: The Heritage of Poverty.* For what most stands out in this compendium of personal statements is that the physical deprivations of the thirties may have faded in people's minds but the psychological impact of the depression is still with us.

Studs Terkel traveled with a tape recorder through various parts of the country, speaking to the embattled farmers who work the drought land of northwest Iowa; to labor leaders and Jimmy Higginses; to New Dealers; to radicals and right wingers; to the children of the thirties who live with the memories of their fathers' shame; to the children of the forties and fifties who repudiate their fathers' obsession with security, comfort and consumption. The fathers' fears have been visited on the children. The impact of the depression takes many forms—for one son it is the haunting memory of sitting at his father's bedside watching the hallucinated old man stashing imaginary papers into imaginary pockets.

The Great Depression put the dusty taste of early failure on the tongues of the fathers. A war economy dissolved the depression but not that taste. They wheeled, still young, through the forties and fifties; and wheeled so furiously it was hard to tell whether they were in pursuit or flight.

They were doing both: living was a matter of erecting protective walls so high no market failure could shake them. And happiness was to own all the shiny appliances money could buy. Until their children perceived that their fathers, though still able-bodied, were quite as hallucinated as that one who'd died stashing imaginary papers into imaginary pockets. And the children were right.

The parents' dread of economic risk engendered a kindred fear of emotional risk: it was safer, more consoling, to express love through gifts of money value than through personal expression. The gifts not only lost value to the children but provoked disgust. Because their parents had got nothing out of their lives by hoarding them so cautiously, the



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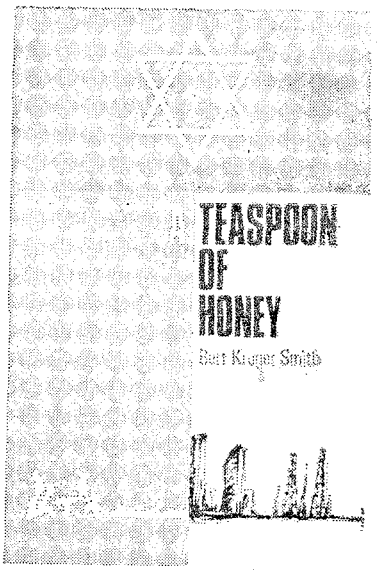


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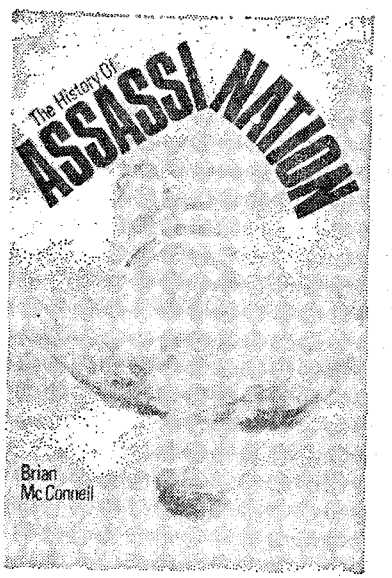


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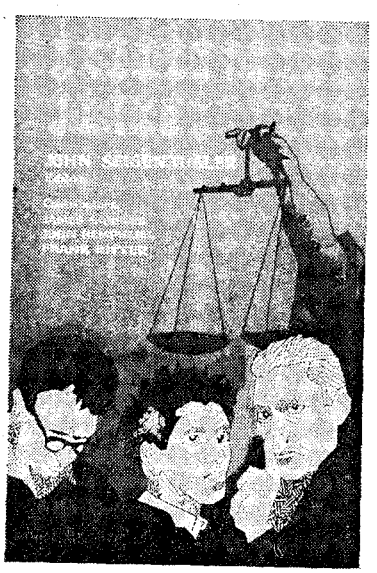

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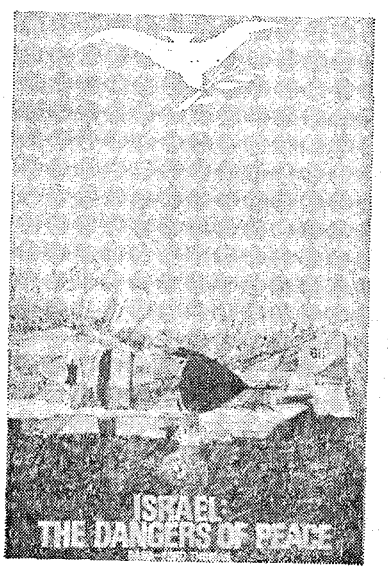


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children threw their own away blindly. The preference for the druggified squalor of a New York tenement to their wholesome Westchester nest was often a vindictive choice.

Studs Terkel demonstrated, in *Division Street . . . America*, the remarkable surmise that the thinker thinks justly only so long as he does not lose contact with those who do not think at all; that the writer retains a hold on truth only so long as he remains in touch with people who live without bookshelves.

This intuition has also lent impact to the studies of Oscar Lewis. But whereas Lewis will stick with a single personality until he obtains understanding in depth, Terkel takes it off the top of the tape and is off to the next sitting. This lends his work wider range than Lewis' but at some cost in characterization and depth. What saves his subjects from merging into a milling throng is the author's discernment of individuality.

There is the young hood who freely associates in his attack on political dissenters: "If you gave 'em a push, they'd turn into a homosexual. When the German hordes fifty years ago surrounded Paris, Marshal Pétain brought out the pimps, whores, thieves, underground operators, he says: our playground is jeopardized by the German Hun. Well, all of Paris, every thief, burglar, pimp, he come out and picked up a musket. Stopped the German hordes. Today you don't see any kind of patriotism like that. Today the Federal Government has expanded into every field. If you use a telephone and you put slugs in it, that's a penitentiary offense. Strange as it may seem. So that will give you an idea how far the Federal Government has encroached on a citizen's prerogative."

And the 20-year-old kid who says: "What does the Depression mean to me? I don't know. I'm not depressed. I can pot out any time I want. A Depression is to me when I can't sit down on my chaise lounge and have a beer and this boob tube right in my face."

And the society photographer whose youth was spent pursuing the Beautiful People of the thirties: "When I was a kid my mother said to me, 'Jerome, I think it's much easier for you to have your breakfast served in bed.' So I always had my breakfast served in bed. And I always had the fire lit in my fireplace. . . . Listen, dear boy, Franklin Roosevelt in those days we didn't even talk about. . . . I thought the American public was frightfully gullible to allow this man to be elected for that last term. Oh, that voice. . . . We don't even discuss the Negro question. Let's forget they're only one-tenth of this country, and what they're putting on, this act—someday they're going to be stepped on like vermin. There's too much: equal rights for whites. I think they've allowed themselves, with their necklaces and long hair, to go too far. . . ."

And the leader of a right-wing group of property owners in Chicago: "I can remember writing a term paper in high school: 'The Need For A Planned Economy.' I take it out and read it once in a while, just to see how foolish youth can be. How could anyone take that seriously? The income tax changed me. I was making money. It burned me up thinking now I had to file it with the government. It was the fact that I had to report to somebody what I made. I hate people to know how much money I have. I would never want to admit it if I was broke. I would never want to admit I was a millionaire. One thing the Depression did was to make us secretive."

By assembling multitudes, from the Yakima Valley to the great Okefenokee swamp, from posh penthouse to tenement slum, by probing to draw out each speaker's individuality, the author has provided us with a definitive report on the psychological recoil of a generation that suffered a failure of nerve. □

# Recurrences

SCATTERED RETURNS. *By L. E. Sissman. Atlantic–Little, Brown. 85 pp. $4.75. Paper $1.95.*

HOME FROM THE CEMETERY. *By Robert Pack. Rutgers University Press. 93 pp. $5.*

FROM THE BERKELEY HILLS. *By George P. Elliott. Harper & Row. 123 pp. $4.95.*

**X. J. KENNEDY**

*Mr. Kennedy teaches English at Tufts University. He is the author of* Growing into Love, *a recent book of poems (Doubleday).*

It is always a joy to see a vast helium-filled generality pricked—especially a pronouncement about poetry. One currently in the air is that only free verse which looks (and reads) like a scattering of bomb fragments can be true to the nervous staccato of contemporary life. A confused and disoriented civilization (so the notion runs) demands that any sort of ordered pattern be avoided. Hence, only those poets whose works on the page appear most spontaneous and accidental (and who, of course, never resort to any meter or rhyme) can tell us how it is these muddled days.

Now, spontaneity is a difficult thing to pronounce about; and it may well be, as Yeats suggested, that the labor of revision (which rhymed stanzas call for) can be, no less than the writing of shaggy first drafts, an act of spontaneous inspiration. Moreover, just why the nervous staccato of contemporary life ought to be a measure for poetry, proponents of the bomb-fragment theory have yet to make clear. Tempos still exist besides those of rush-hour traffic and the TV commercial's popcorn-popper frenzy: there are still the iambic recurrences of seasons, moon and tides, of heartbeat and love-making.

L. E. Sissman steps up to this ballooning generality with a stickpin. As deeply as any poet on the American scene, Sissman is evidently concerned with the nervous pace of contemporary life, with its moral and ideological confusions. Sissman bursts the balloon by writing of these matters in traditional patterns. His discovery is that, by taking the nervous language of the moment and laying it against an iambic pentameter line, a curious tension will result (as in this account of an auto race):

*. . . We ease our red*
*A.C. down off the flatbed: John gets in*
*And comes back dirty from his practice laps.*
*The grid forms up for our heat—under two*
*Litres—the green flag falls, a rush-hour mass*
*Of cars howls off and dwindles. Silence. Smoke.*
*Two minutes, and a faint whine-grunt precedes*
*The field into the chute before the straight.*
*An A6 Maserati leads a light-*
*Blue 1.5 Osca in a scratch duet . . .*

In their diction (the casual mingling of idiomatic American speech with the jargon of the car fan) and in their syntactical run-ons ("mass/ Of cars; light-/ Blue") and their jarring stops ("Silence. Smoke."), those lines seem not only the unmistakable product of their age but an ironic commentary upon it.

Sissman knows our confused and fragmented society from the inside. Much of his work appears intensely personal (I don't know to what extent autobiographical): a grim wedding ceremony, a painful encounter with a deluded friend. He seems a man striving to make sense of his own life as a former radio Quiz Kid, door-to-door salesman, drop-out from Harvard (later reinstated), JFK campaign aide, copy editor and advertising executive. In this second collection, as in his *Dying: An Introduction* (1967), he evokes with apparently total recall an array of people, situations and places in upper-middle-crust Boston, Cambridge and New York. He keeps naming, dating and indexing.

Part of the fun of reading him comes



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in recognizing particular streets, bars, hotels; and for such middle-aging readers as me, there are his reincarnations of "the marching feet of Movietone" and other trivia of the 1940s and 1950s. Some poems wear the look of kept diaries, or scenes out of the context of a novel whose beginning and end we haven't read. And yet, in the best of them—as in the fine sequence "A War Requiem"—Sissman in recording where he's been conveys whole landscapes of understanding.

He has every unfashionable virtue: wit, irony, a knowledge of previous poetry (allusion and parody are among his favorite tactics). I can readily imagine Sissman's winning a large popular following among those whose tastes in art are conservative, and with his nostalgia for the recently vanished past, becoming a sort of American John Betjeman. But any readers who look at him close up will find an unswerving moralist.

Sissman is a man eating dinner in an expensive restaurant who looks up to meet the gaze of a hungry derelict. This shambling figure inhabits a surprising number of the poems. In "Cahiers du Cinéma, 1956," a poor bum rummages a trash can for the *Daily News*, while inside a studio cameras grind upon a floodlit madonna carrying peach ice cream to her "peach-featured, immaterial/ Young holy family."

In "Small Space," Sissman incarnates the reader of that famous one-column-inch ad:

*MEN PAST 40*
*GET UP NIGHTS*
*And look out at*
*City lights,*
*Wondering where they*
*Made the wrong*
*Turn, and why life*
*Is so long.*

Sissman seems haunted by the specter of his own death. He is passionately concerned with the spectacle of worldly vanity, with *memento mori*, with the folly of believing in (as he puts it) "the gift of things and not the gift of love."

Although, more often than not, Robert Pack and George P. Elliott elect for traditional patterns, their work seems less exclusively committed to rhyme and meter than Sissman's. Set them beside most other good contemporary American poets, however, and they too appear a bit old-fangled in their unabashed technical dexterity, their high regard for human intelligence.

Like Sissman, Pack knows the value of formal discipline and the art of drawing a character. In his range, anything is possible from a villanelle to an extended meditation in wide, Whitmanic, image-loaded lines ("The Last Will and Testament of Art Evergreen"). Another of his best is "Your Wound," which begins, "Your wound, like a stuck eye, why have you opened it?"—a poem with a definite cadence, but no pre-existing form that I can discover.

Unlike Sissman, Pack is less moralist or social critic than visionary incantor. His own form of protest, however, may be his vein of sinister humor, which comes through beautifully in "Burning the Laboratory," about a madman's plot for a little apocalypse.

At times, Pack hasn't discovered words simple enough to resolve his poems' inner complexities. Lines raise problems we don't feel challenged to solve:

*A son's parched mouse's springing*
*tidal squeal*
*Rides to a howling whale's vast sea*
*decline.*

That reads like Dylan Thomas on a bender. Pack can't resist sound effects. Bees *jabber*, crickets make *foot-screeps*. (Foot-screeps strikes me as accurate, jabber doesn't.) But when his reckless gambles succeed, the result can be wonderful, as in this "Welcoming Poem for the Birth of My Son":

*Bubbling and bouncing, lumbering*
*amid*
*The tickle of little fishes, whales*
*Jostle the sea; they are blubber*
*balloons*
*Sailing their bodies' happiness . . .*

I admire, in that case, the word-drunkenness, the excess that somehow triumphs. Surely the title poem is one of Pack's best sustained to date: a sequence on the death of a father, ending in a surprising metamorphosis.

In times past, George P. Elliott's reputation as a writer of original, funny and disturbing fiction and criticism has distracted readers from his accomplishment in poetry—even though, as his copyrights indicate, he has been publishing poems in magazines since the early forties. Like Sissman, he seems a poet striving to feel his way through his own experience into an understanding of the world at large.

In this, his first collection of poems, he exhibits a procession of castoff and outgrown styles, as seems natural in a book so long in the making. There is his Yvor Winters voice, full of abstractions, adjectives, studied gestures of syntax inside tight-locked couplets:

*You, who show your nudity*
*At expense of modesty,*
*Must assume, or think you must,*
*Postures of marmorean lust.*

That's pretty bad, and I much prefer his Theodore Roethke voice, with its puns, Elizabethan diction and cheerful raunchiness ("Her Dwarf"):


"Watts is a container of filth and ignorance, because it was created by the white man."

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*"Snuggle me, bunny!" he woos her, basso.*
*"My legs are stubs, but my heart is huge!"*
*He summers a sault, ramps, then plunges.*
*"You guzzle me, gosling! Ho ho I can!*
*Come to the table, and heft me higher!*
*I'll rumple your silk!"*

But Elliott's own voice, if I hear it right, comes out in several tender, ironic poems in which ordinary facts of American life are offered with quiet horror. His title poem is deep, perceptive and (though written in six-stress lines) says much that applies to our own disoriented civilization:

*There no more dwells, in this nearly natural scene,*
*God, Who only claims my uncontumacious awe,*
*Than in my Chevrolet dwells spirit of Machine.*
*These standing tires contain forces that hold hawks high;*
*Waves that green this fender make eucalyptus green.*

The claim of relevance might be made, too, for "A Course of Love," "A Day Off," and "Insurance Man"—this last a poem that knows the weight of a word:

*Throw him out in the gutter.*
*Your life is not for sale.*
*You were born to sorrow*
*If you were born at all,*
*But you were not born to die*
*Though die you must and shall.*

In other fine poems Elliott reveals a Jarrell-like fondness for retold or invented myths: "The Gift," and "Her Journey," a fresh version of the Leda story. "Fever and Chills," a long narrative poem about a joyless adultery, for me doesn't quite overcome its own gravity. Nevertheless, Elliott's poems have traits we have need of nowadays: wisdom, detachment, variety, craftsmanship, and the humility to remain uncollected for a long while.

Sissman, Pack and Elliott, in their fondness for rhyme and meter, invite the accusation that they write in "Pre-existing Form"—a heavy charge these days. (Pre-existing Form is a bugbear invented by old free-verse poets to scare young free-verse poets into wiping their variable feet.) But their victories remind us that any good poem (whether shaped like a Petrarchan sonnet or like a fling of confetti) is language which, in the act of utterance, discovers the pattern right for it. At least, all three poets escape the dictates of current orthodoxy. They show that it is still possible to speak pointedly of our current dilemmas while writing in scannable lines.

Meanwhile, in their struggle not to fall into pre-existing patterns, in their avoidance of recurrences (that is, rhythms) of any kind, many other American poets at the moment resemble that army of supposedly free men in Alfred Jarry's *Ubu Enchaîné*, who drill by the hour to learn how to break ranks, and chorus: "Hup!—two—three—four! All disobey together!" □

# THEATRE

## HAROLD CLURMAN

It is right for the Repertory Theater of Lincoln Center to produce Sam Shepard's *Operation Sidewinder*. Two such different persons as Edward Albee and Elizabeth Hardwick have praised him. His publishers, Bobbs-Merrill, puff him as the "acknowledged genius of the Off-Off-Broadway theatre." Most reviewers sympathetic to the new dramaturgy agree. I therefore congratulate the company at Lincoln Center for choosing to set *Operation Sidewinder*, 26-year-old Shepard's most elaborate play, beside those of Saroyan and Williams in this season's all-American program.

For reasons which should be apparent, much of my review here will consist of quotes. The play makes two complementary points: contemporary America is a scene of total madness and brutality, and this is so because a break between spiritual and material values is destined to destroy us.

Two long speeches crystallize these themes. The first is spoken by the Young Man, the play's central figure. He describes the environmental oppression.

The election oppression: Nixon, Wallace, Humphrey. The headline oppression . . . the radio-broadcast TV oppression. And every other advertisement with their names and faces and voices and haircuts and suits and collars and ties and lies. And I was all set to watch *Mission: Impossible* when Humphrey's flabby face shows up for another hour's alienation session. Oh please say something kind to us, something soft, something human—something different, something real, something—so we can believe again. His squirmy little voice answers us, "You can't always have everything your way." And the oppression of my fellow students becoming depressed. Depressed. Despaired. "We're not going to win. There's nothing we can do to win." We're only losing a little, we say. It could be so much worse. The soldiers are dying, the blacks are dying, the children are dying. . . .

And then I walked through the crowd of smiling people. They were loving and happy, alive and free. . . . You can't always have everything your own way. You'll be arrested. You'll be arrested, accosted, molested, tested and retested. You'll be beaten, you'll be jailed, you'll be thrown out of school. . . . I am a prisoner to all your oppression—I am depressed, deranged, decapitated, dehumanized, defoliated, demented and damned. I can't get out. You can get out. You can smile and laugh and kiss and cry. I am! I am! I am! I am! . . . Tonight. In this desert. In this space.

The second big speech is delivered in an "underground" scene among the desert Indians. As spoken on the stage I could understand only bits of it. Here is its essence: "A great war is about to begin. It will mark the end of the Fourth World and the preparation for the Emergence to the Fifth. . . . Do not seek shelter. It is only materialistic people who seek to make shelters. Those who are at peace with their own hearts are already in the great shelter of life. . . . Those who take no part in the making of world division are ready to resume life in another world. They are all one, brothers. The war will be a spiritual conflict with material things. Material matters will be destroyed by spiritual beings who will remain to create one world and one nation under one power, that of the Creator. The time is not far off. . . ."

There are, according to the Indian sibyl who speaks these lines, two kinds of men, those of the Snake Clan and the others of the Lizard Clan. The first represents the spiritual, the other the material—they are the head and tail of one body. Due to the jealousy of the Lizard tail, a cleavage occurred which led to havoc. But the two would one day be joined together in "the night of the great dance." A select few who understand and accept this mystery, "who live in



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CHE

*On my wall a curious photo of Che*
*his brow matted, his eyes hunting relief.*
*Once at least he acknowledged pain*
*or else he was annoyed*
*at the photographer.*

Todd Gitlin

the high mesa of this desert," will be saved from the holocaust which would destroy all others in the Fourth World. And this comes to pass.

These speeches suffice to clarify the play's prophetic, lyric, ideological aspects. But what of the play's body? It is put together in picaresque scenes of boyishly tough American humor. With the aid of his director, and of the lighting and special effects personnel, Shepard employs the full panoply of the stage, including a trick red-eyed snake, gunplay, electric storms, a singing rock and roll band, strobe lights, Indian ceremonial dances—in short, mixed media.

Most of the play's scenes show everyone, including the Young Man, preparing for violence in addle-brained rebellion against the powers that be. The conspirators are whites, blacks and redskins. (But Shepard is certainly not a partisan of violence, no matter how morally motivated.) Other scenes reveal stupid military men, a crazy inventor who has designed a sentient, thinking computer in the guise of a snake (the sidewinder of the title) to explore future possibilities beyond the range of human calculation. There is also an FBI investigator who mouths all the usual denunciations against the disturbers of the *status quo*. (It is not altogether clear why the computer-snake becomes the legendary serpent whose organic unity saves the blessed remnant from universal destruction of which it is also the instrument. Are we to suppose that the machine may also serve to redeem us?) In the surface desultoriness of its scenes the play puzzles the audience at first and thus tends to alienate it.

The evening's final moment—the great destruction, a blinding explosion—is scenic fun. (How pretty the world's devastation is made on stage and in photos.) Still, much of the play is dull. This is due only in part to the impression of aimlessness made by the peculiar sequence of scenes. Contributing even more to a strange boredom is the fact that the play's satire, for all its extravagance and color, is banal. There are random killings, popular obscenities, and a farcically conceived atmosphere of "Wild West" abandon. These are very much like the simplistic blasphemies about the idiotic heartlessness of our reigning mercantile, mechanical and military complex so commonly projected by the juvenile *avant-garde* of stage and screen.

Yes! Our civilization is coming apart at the seams, with its rip and roar becoming sensible even to the deaf. But how tiresome is the announcement of this Armageddon when it is perpetually blared through raucous symbols. Why can't our condition be fleshed in real human behavior, in its subtle as well as in its most patent manifestations, in homes, individual minds, institutions, industries? Luridly generalized, the disarray becomes just display, obstreperous entertainment barely more inspiring than the horrors presumably being lampooned.

Shepard has imagination and a feeling for the theatre. To serve his talent he must become factually more specific and verbally more eloquent. He must discipline himself to sharper thought or cultivate more incisive powers of lyric expression. Has our situation become so hopeless that we can do no more in the arts than rock, roll, rattle and scream?

As a production, *Operation Sidewinder* is physically ambitious, occasionally ingenious and eye-catching. One wonders if because of the pressure of time the gifted director, Michael Schultz, became more concerned with stage paraphernalia than with the acting—none of which calls for particular mention.

Murray Schisgal has a gift for taking topical notions and doing cute things with them. He is a "comic" in dispute with current trends and fads. *The Chinese and Dr. Fish* are two playlets (Ethel Barrymore Theatre). In *Dr. Fish* he takes a crack at psychotherapeutic jive in regard to sex. In *The Chinese*, he is, I suppose, showing up the nonsense of racial prejudice.

*Dr. Fish* induces several laughs at the start, but fizzles before it is halfway finished. *The Chinese* is much funnier because of the oddity of its plot (nothing is gained by divulging it) and by the jollity of its performance.

In *Dr. Fish* Vincent Gardenia as an ordinary guy afflicted by silly marital troubles, and Charlotte Rae as his sexually querulous wife, are amusing. In *The Chinese* three Caucasian actors—Joseph Bova, Alice Drummond and Marcia Jean Kurtz—play Chinese characters very well indeed. Miss Drummond, especially, conveys a quaint comedic poetry in speech and manner. William Devane as a Chinese of another stripe (or color) is also good, and Louise Lasser as his Jewish girl friend is in proper tune.

These plays are not as successful as the author's earlier *The Typists and The Tiger*, and *Luv*. It might have been wiser to have produced *The Chinese and Dr. Fish* Off-Broadway. They are only extended vaudeville skits. □

# RECORDS

## DAVID HAMILTON

Those of us who have grown up with recordings all around us—and by now that means the vast majority of musicians and listeners—are hardly in a position to imagine what a severe break with the past the very idea of "canned" music must represent. This break occurred very slowly, over a period of nearly a century, with the phonograph regarded first as a toy, then as a form of light entertainment, and eventually as a useful ancillary device for musical education and propaganda, so that very few people present at the beginning can have imagined that it would eventually become our culture's main source of music; indeed, only in the last few decades have improvements in sound quality reached the point where a recording


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could convey most of the nuances of a live performance, and thus be regarded as having any direct musical value.

In the early stages, one of the most obvious aspects of recordings was their documentary function: they enable later generations to hear performances of the past (and, to a certain extent, works of the past that are no longer in the current repertory). To be sure, this has only rarely been the reason why recordings were made, for that sort of long-range market does not greatly interest the communications and entertainment industry. Most of the commercial records of the past that are now regarded as having great historical importance were made originally for the most immediate commercial reasons, the history of records is studded with missed documentary opportunities. (The really deplorable fact about this aspect of the recording industry is that only a very small percentage of the existing documents in sound are readily accessible to interested musicians and listeners; the few valiant archives of recordings are starved for money and equipment, and the record companies—which understandably cannot keep everything in print—have failed to come up with any reasonable scheme for making custom copies available on a legitimate basis, comparable to the Xerox program for copying out-of-print books.)

I suggest, however, that there is another side to the significance of records. To the 19th-century composer (and, of course, to his predecessors), it was an unspoken assumption that any and every performance of his music was in some degree unique and unrepeatable, another in a necessarily infinite series of re-creations. This obvious and unavoidable factor of flexibility and variety was taken for granted as part of his aesthetic outlook—to what effect on his compositions we can hardly as yet perceive, although when a broad and stylistically varied repertory of music has accumulated around the opposite assumption (i.e., music composed and performed directly onto a fixed recording medium), it may be possible to distinguish some of the consequences to composition.

That popular music has already adapted itself to the new medium is quite obvious; since 1950, recordings in this area have moved ever further from any idea of reproducing the sounds of live performances, to reach a point where they comprise a form of electronic composition and performance, unique to the medium and not reproducible in "live" form. In such music, the loss of variety and spontaneity that inevitably results when a record is heard repeatedly to the point of complete predictability does not matter very much; by the time that a given record wears out its interest, it will have been superseded by something "newer." (The acceptability of unvaried recordings is probably complex, psychologically; among less sophisticated listeners there may be a real need for the assurance provided by identical repetition—a need that is also felt, I suspect, by those "fans" of art music who aurally fondle *ad infinitum* the cherished recordings of their favorite performers.)

But other traditions of musical activity do not accommodate themselves so easily to freezing on acetate. The art of jazz, in which improvisation and spontaneity play such a fundamental role, is ill-adapted to survive in a culture based preponderantly on "canned" music, even though it suffers nothing like the economic problems that today beset concert music. And I think it is now apparent that the reactive attempts to enlarge the scope of improvisational activity in art music—whether the responsible approaches of a Gunther Schuller or the irresponsible ones of the Dada fringe—have made no lasting impression, probably because their widest dispersion has, necessarily, been through the rigidly anti-spontaneous medium of recordings. (An ironic aspect of this same development has been the rediscovery of older improvisatory traditions, notably the baroque practice of melodic ornamentation, just when such "improvised" embellishment will be distributed primarily in a fixed form.)

For a long time now, we have taken for granted that recordings are primarily a Good Thing for art music. As long as their circulation was relatively limited, mostly to persons with considerable direct experience of the variety and vitality of a tradition of live performance, and as long as they remained basically ancillary to that tradition, that was certainly so. But the vastly expanded distribution of classical recordings has, I think, brought about a difference of kind as well as of degree. Live performance is well on the way to becoming subsidiary, both economically and functionally, to records, which by their very nature misrepresent to some degree (and possibly a fatal one) the main traditions of Western art music—and, not incidentally, also those of non-Western cultures. In broad and currently fashionable terms, the problem we face is that of assuring the survival of these traditions in the transition from the humanistic to the technological age. I use these terms not to urge a necessary acceptance of the ideological framework they imply but rather because, given their present symbolic status, they manage to suggest the magnitude of the problem, and the vastly wider frame of reference that we must consider, far beyond such simple issues as supporting our local performing organizations. □



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# Crossword Puzzle No. 1339

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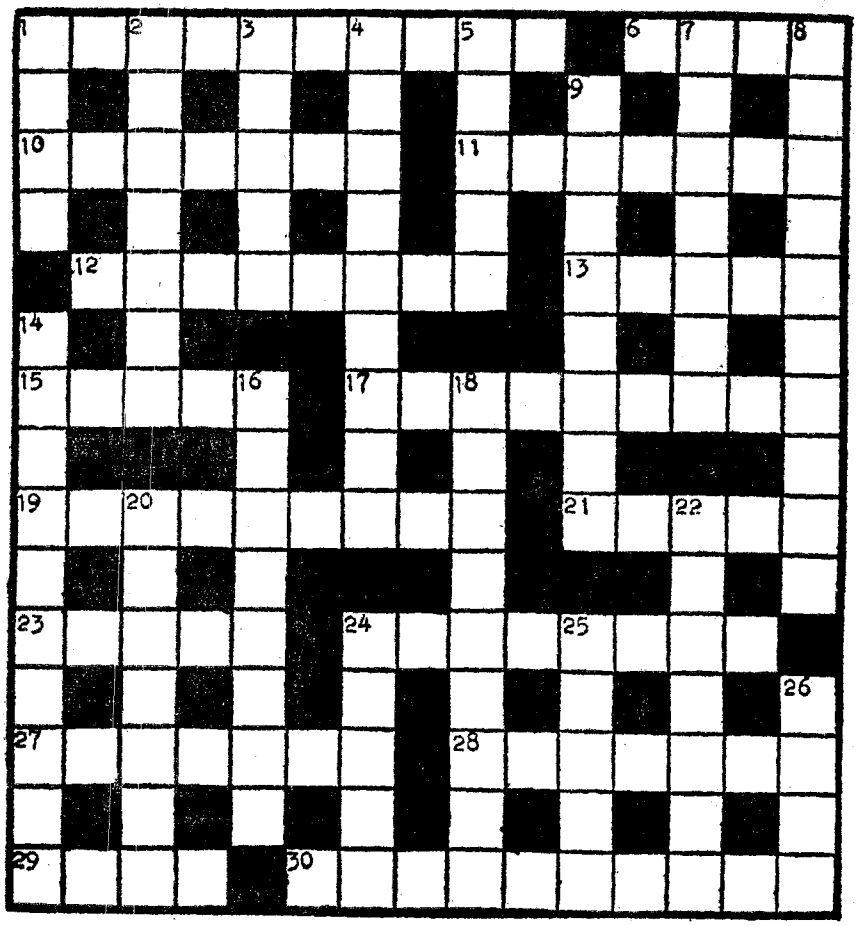

ACROSS

1 According to the favorite going price, you might be guilty of something if you do. (10)
6 One might easily have the 5 role. (4)
10 Such brief excursions obviously call for clever remarks. (7)
11 See 17 across
12 See 1 down
13 How to make rust move with sound, and turn bad. (5)
15 Start in and bring help back to the country. (5)
17, 29 and 11 across Only the retiring types probably would say it. (3,1,3,2,4,2,5)
19 Hardly the job for a soft liver, despite the breakdown. (9)
21 Change your working hours, possibly.
23 The tail-end of the alphabet has this letter first. (5)
24 Even a thing to catch cattle might be in this shape. (8)
27 The wrong way to cheer something put on, as one might gather. (7)
28 Is anger so bearing fruit? (7)
29 See 17 across
30 It doesn't really—it just squeaks sometimes! (Their subjects are brought up before the board.) (5,5)

DOWN

1 and 12 across It doesn't involve job swapping—but military types might rely on it. (4,8)
2 Loose grass around, so kept loose. (7)
3 Cavell or Sitwell, for example. (5)
4 Encores an alternative sound quality.
5 The right sort let it. (5)
7 Right after Labor Day, for example. (7)
8 What a certain type of congressman does concerning gifts? (10)
9 Like an Israelite king, way up in attacks. (8)
14 A message might be killed this way.
16 Get it as a form of what the trouble-maker does sometimes? (8)
18 One had a solitary way, according to Bryant. (9)
20 The Ebro and the Wye might be confused by what is raised by a question sometimes. (7)
22 Such an action may produce fine results. (7)
24 Is everything black when you fall forward? (5)
25 You might feel it when a storm blows up. (5)
26 Adversity's are reputedly sweet. (4)

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE NO. 1338

ACROSS: 1 Watering places; 9 Shingle; 11 Enmity; 12 Immature; 14 Roomers; 15 Crete; 17 Debts; 19 One-step; 21 Backside; 23 Slicks; 25 Glucose; 26 Connive; 27 Sentimentalism. DOWN: 1 Wasteland; 2 Trimmer; 3 Righteous; 4 Need; 5 Past master; 6 Arena; 7 Enthuse; 8 Idle; 13 Second team; 15 Catalonia; 16 Endosperm; 18 Because; 20 Puccini; 21 Bugs; 22 and 10 Short-sheeted; 24 Scan.


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